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MODERN DRUMMER

April 2005

TOMMY LEE

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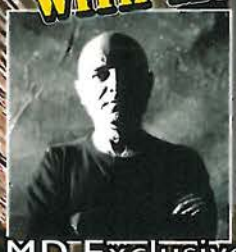

MD Exclusive: Jazz Legend
Paul Motian

R.E.M.'s **Bill Rieflin**
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Girl Power: Hilary Duff's
Shauney Baby

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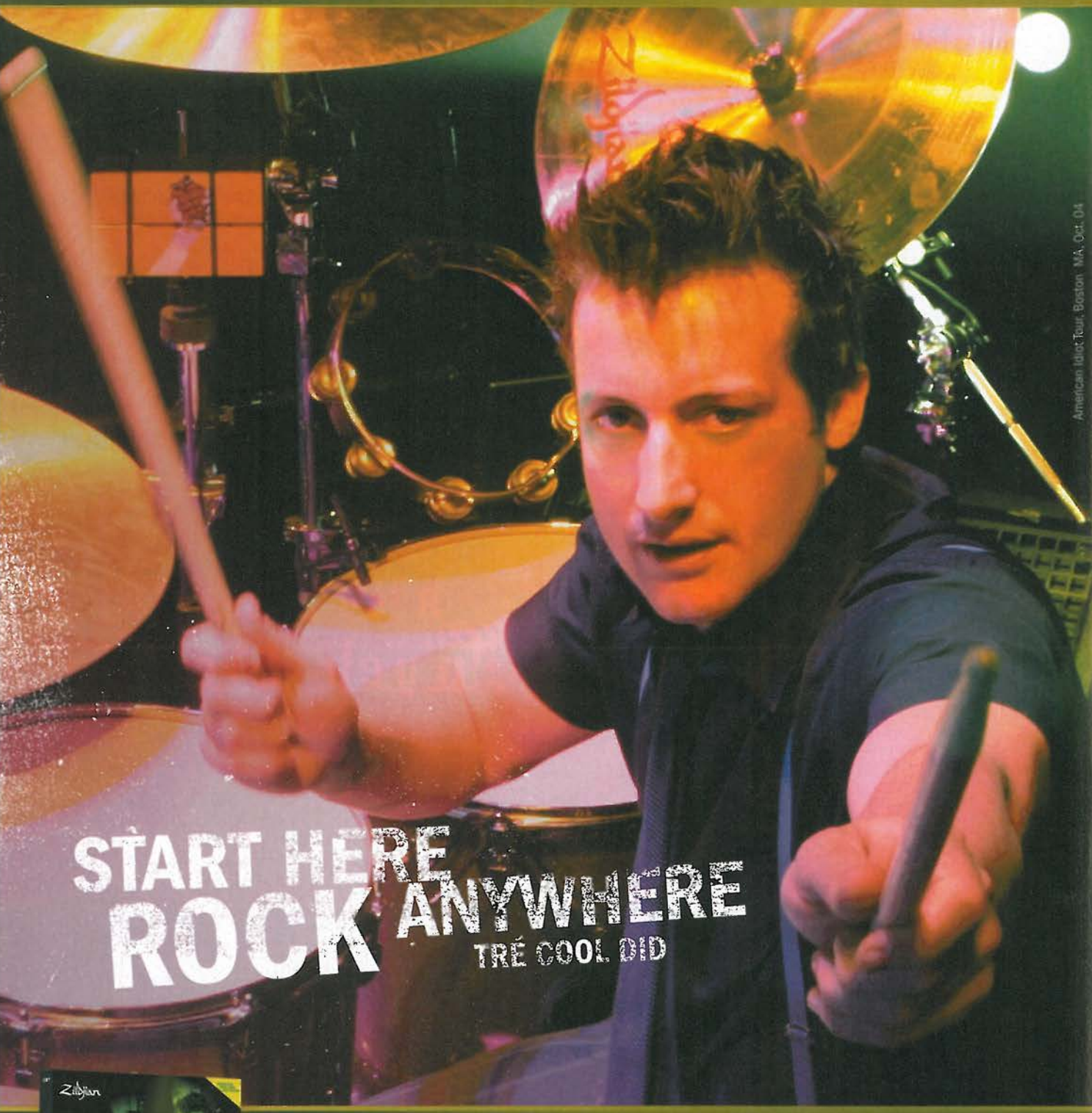

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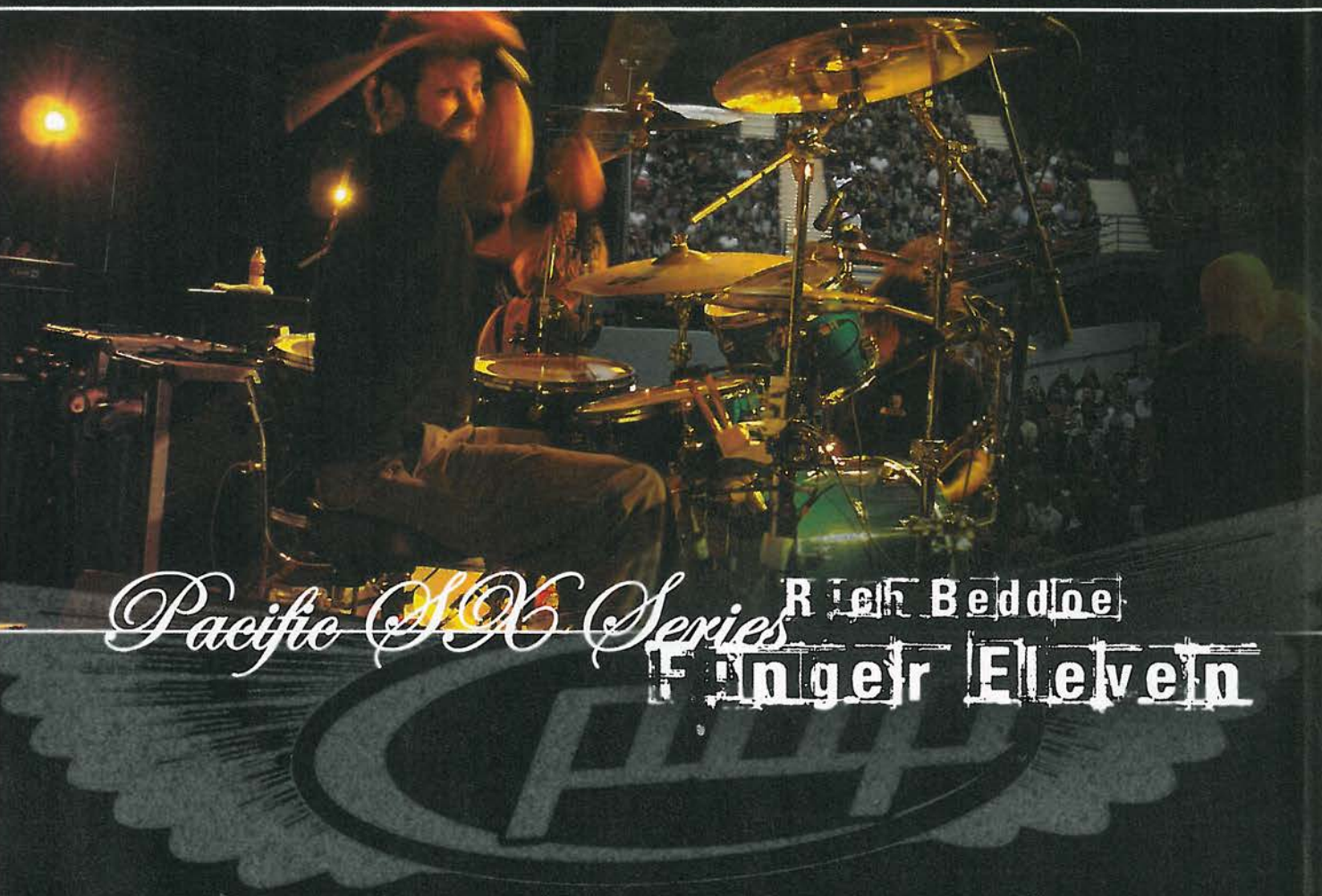

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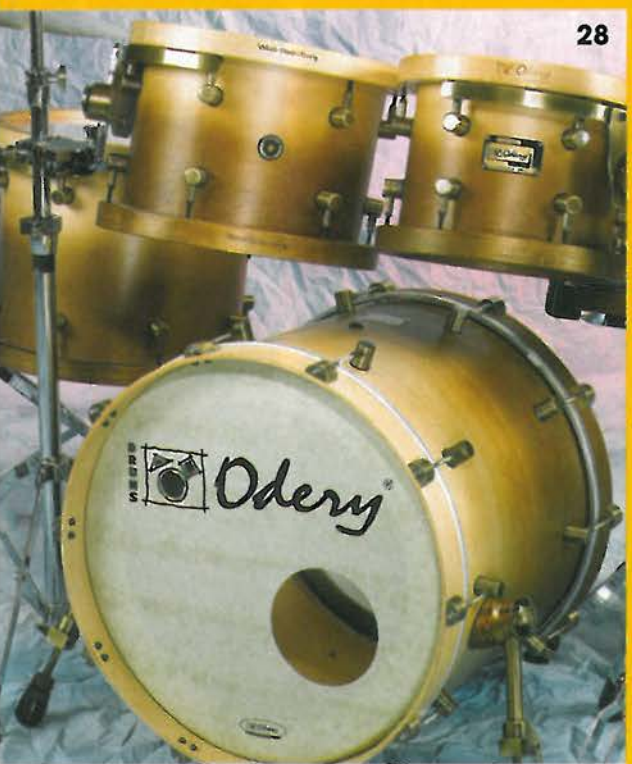

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The Festival Returns

My editorial in the February '04 issue explained why *MD* would not present a Festival Weekend in 2004. I closed by saying that we'd come back better than ever in 2005. Well, *we're back*, with a new venue and a whole new vibe to the show.

To begin with, we've moved the Festival to the fabulous Prudential Hall at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. The ad in our January issue gave just an idea of the size and beauty of this facility. It's the newest performance space in New Jersey, with state-of-the-art technical capabilities, outstanding audience amenities, and, most importantly, seating for over 2,000 avid drumming fans. This should allow us to accommodate *everybody* who wants to experience the Festival. So come one, come all!

Naturally, a change of venue means a change in other aspects of the Festival, such as hotels in the area, parking, driving directions, and so forth. We'll keep you informed about all of that as much as possible on *MD*'s Web site, www.moderndrummer.com. Check it frequently for updates.

Another new feature of the Festival is the introduction of reserved seating. You can now select your seat ahead of time, with no need to stand in line on the day of the show. (Note to The 3:30 Club: There are some terrific diners in the area if you still feel compelled to get together at the crack of dawn.) But the social atmosphere of the Festival shouldn't suffer, because NJPAC offers lots of lobby space and a lovely courtyard for pre-show and between-act visits.

Speaking of seating, the ticket information contained in our February '05 Festival ad was slightly incorrect. As indicated in the ad on page 66 of this issue, Premium seats are available on the Orchestra, Grand Tier, and First Tier levels at $70 per day or $125 for the two-day package. Additional Orchestra, Grand Tier, and First Tier seats are available at $65/$115, while seats in the Second Tier are priced at $60/$105. Check with the NJPAC box office at (888) 466-5722 for further clarification.

Last but certainly not least, our artist lineup for 2005 will feature a terrific combination of legendary drumming stars and hot new talent, along with some surprises that I don't want to divulge just yet. Many of our artists are announced in this issue's Festival ad. Stay tuned for the rest of the lineup.

Now all that remains is for you to make plans to join us. After all, the Festival wouldn't be the same without you there!

p.s. On a side note, this issue marks a personal milestone for me. My byline first appeared in *MD* when my *Club Scene* column debuted in the April 1980 issue. That means I've been associated with *Modern Drummer* for twenty-five years. (*Senior* editor, indeed!) I'm looking forward to the next twenty-five. Thanks, folks.

MODERN DRUMMER

Volume 29 Number 4

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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:
Michael Bettine, Robyn Flans, Burt Korall, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Mark Parsons, Mike Haid, Robin Tolleson, Lauren Vogel Weiss, T. Bruce Wittet.

MODERN DRUMMER magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc., 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. PERIODICALS MAIL POSTAGE paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 2005 by MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES: MODERN DRUMMER Publications, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel: (973) 239-4140. Fax: (973) 239-7139. Email: mdinfo@moderndrummer.com.

MODERN DRUMMER welcomes manuscripts and photographic material, however, cannot assume responsibility for them. Such items must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: US, Canada, and Mexico $34.97 per year; $56.97, two years. Other international $41.97 per year, $79.97, two years. Single copies $4.99.

SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE: Modern Drummer, PO Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-0480. Change of address: Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. Call (800) 551-3786 or (815) 734-1170.

MUSIC DEALERS: Modern Drummer is available for resale at bulk rates. Direct correspondence to Modern Drummer Retail Vision, 2 Maple Street, Suite 6, Middlebury, VT 05753, (800) 381-1288.

REPRINTS: Reprints of Modern Drummer articles can be supplied on request. Contact Tracy Kearns at MD for details: (973) 239-4140.

INTERNATIONAL LICENSING REPRESENTATIVE: Robert Abramson & Associates, Inc., Libby Abramson, President, PO Box 740346, Boyton Beach, FL 33474-0346, abramson@prodigy.net.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Modern Drummer, PO Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

MEMBER: National Association Of Music Merchants, American Music Conference, Percussive Arts Society, Music Educators National Conference, Percussion Marketing Council, Music Magazine Publishers Association

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The January '05 Issue

Should someone ever ask me why I read *Modern Drummer*, all I'll have to do is point to the January 2005 issue. Everything in that issue reinforced *MD*'s reputation as the world's foremost drumming magazine. The interview with a master musician like Prince helped put drumming in a wider musical context. John Blackwell's story was as inspiring spiritually as it was musically. The feature on Shadows Fall drummer Jason Bittner was entertaining and educational (and an inspirational boost to my own double-bass efforts). And finally, the Glenn Kotche interview helped reinforce the point that rock drumming isn't always synonymous with Neanderthalic slamming.

This alone would amply demonstrate to anyone why I've been religiously reading this magazine for fifteen years. But as an added bonus, there's *MD*'s new design: modern and striking, yet still in line with *MD*'s iconic status in the drumming world. All in all, an outstanding issue, and a promise of many wonderful things to come in the years ahead. I'm sure that Ron Spagnardi is grinning from ear to ear over his magazine's continuing evolution. **James Buckley**

MD's New Look

I know you'll get flack from traditionalists over your new cover. But I personally think it brings *MD* into the 21st century. As Isabel Spagnardi said in her editorial, it visually underscores the "modern" aspect of *Modern Drummer*. Good job. **Frank Aspenado**

After your teaser in the December '04 issue, I was looking forward to the new cover treatment and logo. But whoever approved this particular design was sadly off target. At best the logo is ordinary. At worst it is a disaster of design. The two-color scheme is terribly unbalanced. I would strongly suggest going back to the drawing board, or bringing back the old logo. **Michael T. Burdette**

Kudos to the *MD* staff on producing the best drum mag on the planet. I like the new cover; it was a welcome change. You guys keep rockin'! **Dave "Lambo" Lambert**

For the first time in almost thirty years, when I got the January '05 issue in the mail I didn't rip the plastic off to start my reading and learning. I found myself staring at the cover in disbelief, with a sense of betrayal by my mentors...my counselors...my bible.

I'm sure that you deliberated for months on what logo to go with. I also know that nothing is likely to make the logo go back—unless, of course, *all* of your readers feel the same way I do. With that in mind, I propose a petition to get the familiar look back. Notice I did not say "old" look. I've always felt that the *MD* logo was timeless, and it always will be. **George R. Waterman**

Regarding the new cover design: It's like covering a Rolls Royce with spray paint. **Trevon Hatfield**

Pin a medal on the designers! The new cover look takes *MD* out of the past and into a bold new era. **Jennifer Espinosa**

I like the fresh look to *MD*'s overall cover design, as well as the changes you've made to the inside layout. The vote's not in yet about the new logo, though. I'll give you (and myself) a few more issues before I decide whether the new logo represents the content and philosophy of the magazine the way the classic logo did. **Paul Atherton**

Prince & John Blackwell

You give me goosebumps every time you do an article on musical giants like Prince and John Blackwell. I'm totally blown away at how Prince goes about creating the drumming for his music. I knew he was versatile, but he had a valuable answer for every question, and he went into such *detail*.

As to John Blackwell, I am very saddened by his loss, and I am impressed by his motivation to carry on.

Finally, my compliments to Isabel Spagnardi for her editorial, and for carrying the *MD* torch and keeping it so well lit! **Dave Betti**

Thanks for the article on John Blackwell. He's an awesome drummer, with excellent technique, solid chops, and great feel. I send my condolences to John and his family on the tragic loss of their daughter, Jia. I pray God will keep his hand over the family, and will give John a successful life as a father, husband, and influential drummer. **Scott Waldner**

From Jason Bittner

First, thank you from the bottom of my heart for the incredible coverage in *MD*'s January issue. I'm proud to be a part of the *MD* community, and I look forward to doing my best at the Festival this coming May.

Second, and sadly, I feel the need to comment on the horrific incident that happened in Columbus, Ohio this past December 8, where Dimebag Darrell Abbott from Damageplan (and formerly Pantera) was gunned down on stage, along with several others. Shadows Fall had just wrapped up a

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five-and-a-half-week tour with them two days prior to the incident. Along with his brother Vinnie Paul Abbott, Dime was one of the nicest people I've ever met in the industry, and we all became pretty good friends. Thankfully, Shadows Fall was not there to witness what happened.

All I can say in this time of sorrow is that every drummer across the nation, whether or not they liked Damageplan or Pantera, should say a prayer for Vinnie and the Abbott family to help them get through this. And also say a prayer for Vinnie, in hopes that he doesn't decide to quit playing drums altogether after this tragedy.

The music business is hard enough. The only thing we should worry about while on stage is giving a great performance, not whether or not we're going to make it through the set. **Jason Bittner**
Shadows Fall

More Condolences To Vinnie

I want to express my deepest sympathy to Vinnie Paul and his family. Vinnie: I can't really comprehend what a tragic thing this is for you. But I want you to know you're thought of, even though we've never met. Peace to you. **Doug Byrd**

I saw Dimebag, Vinnie Paul, and Damageplan play one of the greatest shows I've ever seen in Clifton Park, New York on December 5. I can't believe that this could happen three days later. Vinnie has always been an influential drummer and musician for me. The music that he and Dimebag created always came from the heart. They never followed any radio trends, and they always put their love for music and their fans first.

I want to express my deepest condolences to Vinnie Paul, the Abbott family, and all the friends and familes of the victims. This was a completely senseless act that has left us all looking for answers that we may never find. **Dan Matuk**

On behalf of dozens of musicians in my acquaintance (and millions more I don't know), I would like to offer to Vinnie Paul our most sincere and heartfelt condolences for his unfathomable loss. The vast brother/sisterhood of musicians has lost a remarkable presence and musical force. But as significant as that loss is, it pales in comparison to Vinnie's. I cannot imagine losing a bandmate in such a terrifying way, let alone a brother. **Steve Leathart**

Thanks From Louie & Francine

It is truly difficult for us to express the fullness of our gratitude to *Modern Drummer* for the absolutely marvelous cover story you did in your December '04 issue, in honor of Louie's eightieth birthday. You simply outdid yourselves!

It is also difficult, yet surmountable, to mourn the deaths of colleagues Elvin Jones (Oct. '04 *MD*) and Joe Raynor (Jan. '05 *MD*). Both were friends with whom Louie kept contact and now remembers fondly.

We felt that your readers might be interested to see the full outcome of the 1941 Gene Krupa Drum Contest that was mentioned in Joe Raynor's *In Memoriam* eulogy. As marked on the photo, Joe Raynor was second. Louie was first. Perhaps a reader could identify the third- and fourth-place winners.

Again, we thank you for the wonderful coverage. **Louie & Francine Bellson**

From left: H.H. Slingerland, Louie Bellson, Gene Krupa, Joe Raynor, and two unidentified drummers.

Billy Ward On "Making It"

Billy Ward's "Making It" article in the January 2005 issue is a concise and personal commentary on a subject that all too many drummers are fearful to face head-on. Billy's candor with regard to his own musical experiences and choices provide strong impetus for readers to take a good, hard look at themselves, and to re-evaluate previously held beliefs about success.

People need to have the conviction and strength to define success for themselves, based upon their own reality, beliefs, and actions. That's what leads to self-knowledge, and an appreciation of true accomplishment. **Andy**

John Tempesta

Thanks for your John Tempesta interview (Dec. '04 *MD*). John was a tremendous influence on me when I first started getting serious about drumming, and he continues to be a source of inspiration.

I recently saw John and Helmet perform in Dallas, and the show was incredible. Helmet also has to be the most fan-friendly band in the world, and John Tempesta exemplifies that attitude. I had the pleasure of meeting John after Helmet's soundcheck, and I told him what an influence he has been on my playing. He was very gracious, and was happy to hear that I was a fan from way back. During the show, John made sure that I got one of his drumsticks. Afterwards, he posed for a photo with me. I hope he sees this letter and knows what a great experience I—and everyone in the crowd—had at Helmet's show. **Will Jaeger**

Dropped Beat

The "Significant Reissues" review within the January '05 *Critique* department lists Philly Joe Jones as the drummer on Freddie Hubbard's *Ready For Freddie*. The drummer was Elvin Jones.

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Switching Hi-Hat Tops And Bottoms

I recently cracked and chipped the top cymbal on my pair of 14" Z Custom hi-hats. Knowing that I'm a hard hitter and that breakage like this isn't uncommon, I considered replacing the top hat with another bottom hat, thinking that because it's thicker it would last longer. I've also read Zildjian's description of their Z Custom Mastersounds and decided that was a sound I was more looking for. So now I'm considering using a Z Custom Mastersound bottom for my bottom cymbal and my original Z Custom bottom for my top cymbal. Would this be a recommended hi-hat combination, and if so, what kind of sound might it produce? **Matthew Dougherty**

Z Custom (above, top) and Z Custom Mastersound hi-hats

Zildjian director of education John King responds, "Your question inspired me to experiment with your proposed setup first-hand in our Drummers Lounge. I first 'tuned up' by playing a pair of 14" Z Custom hi-hats similar to yours. I then turned them over, placing the designated 'bottom' cymbal on the top. The stick attack was slightly more pronounced, while the 'chick' sound when the pair were played together with the foot remained much the same as with the traditional setup.

"I then substituted a Z Custom Mastersound bottom for the Z Custom top cymbal that I had switched to the bottom. To my ear, the pair now became very harsh and not very pleasing, both in stick response and overall blend. They'd only serve if you needed exaggerated volume from your hats within an *extremely* loud environment. However, I found that the Z Custom Mastersound bottom worked well as a *top* (paired with a traditional Z Custom top as a bottom cymbal), providing a bit more 'sizzle' quality when closed.

"I suggest that you consider replacing your cracked Z Custom top cymbal with another one like it, but use it in the bottom position, with your current bottom cymbal switched to the top position. This might allow that pair to better accept your hard hitting. If your existing top is not cracked too severely, you might want to try this setup to at least hear the blend that I've described."

Tom Mounting On A Snare Stand

Some people say that mounting a tom on a snare drum stand greatly reduces the resonance of the drum; others say that it doesn't affect the sound at all. What's your opinion? Also, if this is a feasible idea, does the type of snare stand used make a difference? **Mark**

Carmine Appice and Charlie Watts are two drummers who have successfully mounted rack toms on snare stands.

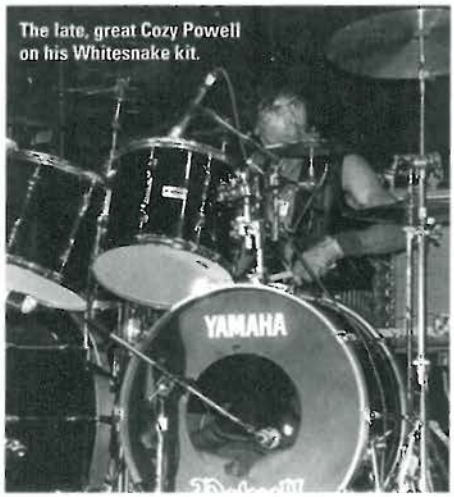
Our experiments while conducting product reviews over the years have indicated that mounting a tom on a snare stand can reduce some of the drum's resonance. This effect becomes more pronounced if the drum is locked tightly into the basket of the stand. However, remember that drummers often have to use muffling devices to *deliberately* reduce the resonance of their toms. So whether or not the reduction caused by stand mounting is a problem may depend on the situation. Also, in cases of a large bass drum and tom, it may be impractical to mount the tom on the bass drum, making stand-mounting the only option.

Several notable drummers, including Carmine Appice and Charlie Watts, have successfully mounted their rack toms on snare stands. If you choose to emulate them, you'll want a stand that provides enough height and angle adjustability to position the drum where you need it. The basket grip design should also be able to hold the drum securely without being clamped too tightly around the bottom rim of the drum.

Cozy Powell's Drums

I have a 1993 video of The Brian May Band with Cozy Powell on drums, and he's *incredible*. It's such a shame to have lost him. Could you describe his drum setup? **Peter Dent**

Our answer comes through the courtesy of Yamaha artist relations manager Joe Testa. According to Joe, Cozy used different kits for different bands. Here are three that he used while he was a Yamaha endorser.



The late, great Cozy Powell on his Whitesnake kit.

With Brian May, Cozy used a Maple Custom kit with 9x13 and 10x14 rack toms, 16x16 and 18x18 floor toms, two 20x24 bass drums, and a 6x14 snare.

With Black Sabbath, he used Maple Custom toms with Tour Custom bass drums. The toms included two extra-deep small-diameter models—14x6 and 16x8—along with 9x13 and 10x14 rack toms and 18x18 and 20x20 floor toms. That kit featured two 20x26 bass drums and a 6x14 snare.

With Whitesnake, Cozy used the 9000 series kit shown in the photo below, with two 10x14 or 12x15 rack toms, two 16x16 floor toms, two 14x26 bass drums, and a 6½x14 snare drum.

Questions For MD's Drum Experts?

Send them to It's Questionable,
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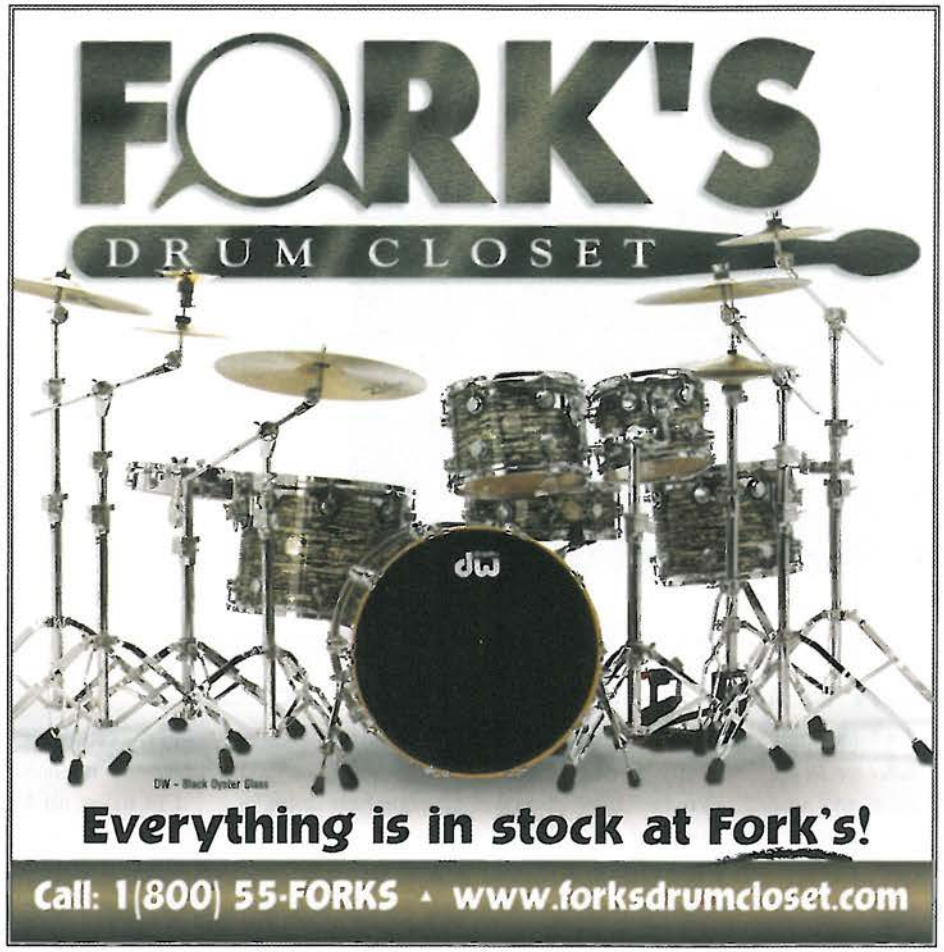
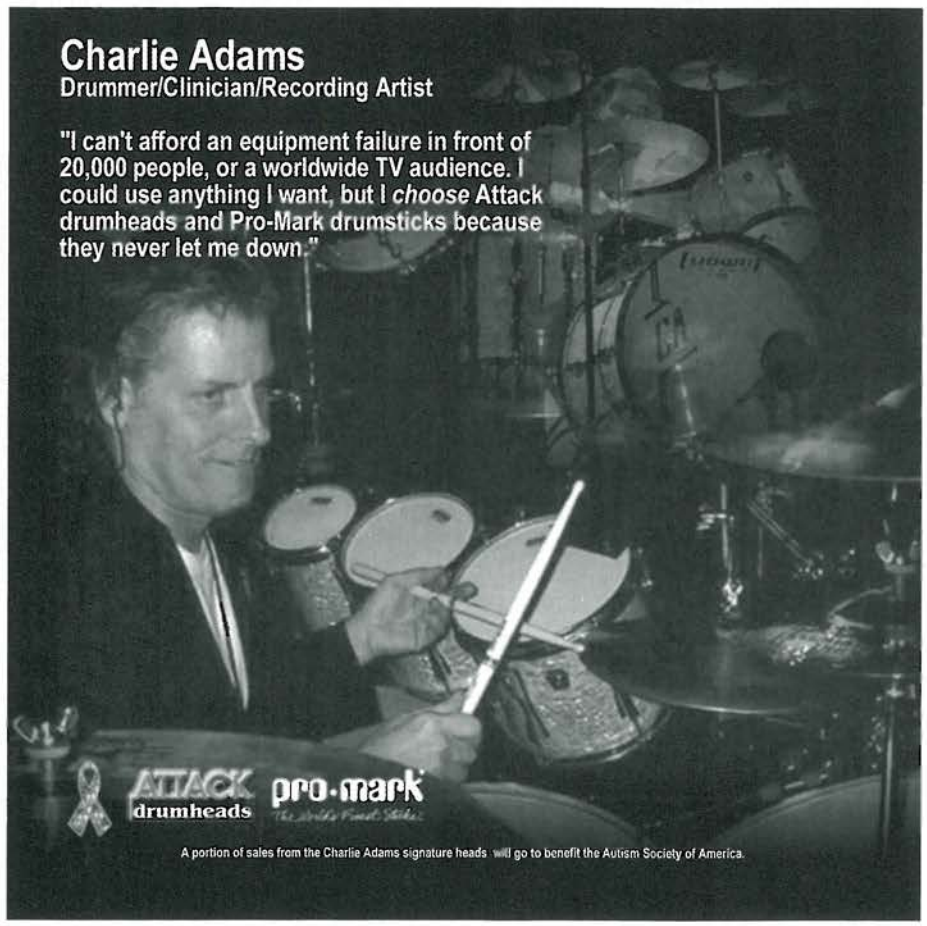
Please include your full name with your question.





Chad Smith's Organic Time

Q Your timing on the Chili Peppers' *Blood Sugar Sex Magik* is flawless. Did you use a click track while recording that album? **Nal Kampan**

A Thanks for the compliment on my time. We didn't use a click track on that record, or on any of our records. We like the songs to groove organically, and we want them to feel as good as possible. We all play at the same time in the same room, looking at and locking in with each other. I've found that that's the best way to capture the magic on tape.

Of course, it also helps if the other players have good time as well. It's everyone's job to give the song a great feel.

Thanks for enjoying our music. You must be very smart, with excellent taste!

Marco Minnemann
On Bass Drums And Woofers

Q I love how your kick drum sounds on *Marco Minnemann: Live In LA*. I recently purchased a DW kit with an 18x22 bass drum and an 8x22 Woofer. How do you tune your bass drum in comparison to your Woofer? **Evan**

A Thanks for your question. With a bass drum/Woofer combination, you have to experiment a bit to find the "sweet spot" where the sound connects best. You'll need to move the Woofer slightly closer or further away in order to determine the best pickup possibilities.

I'm using all Evans G1 single-ply heads on the front and back of my drums, and I tune them fairly low. I might tune the front head of the bass drum a little higher. On the Woofer, both heads are at about the same tuning, and overall they're slightly higher than the heads on the regular bass drum in order to get a little more tone.

Tuning Tips And More From Hilary Jones

Q You are one of my all-time favorite drummers. I first "discovered" you after buying the *MD Festival 2000* DVD. Your drum solo at that show was fantastic—especially when you grooved softly on the tom-toms with a "feathery" touch.

To what notes do you tune your toms in order to get that awesome resonance when simply tapping them? Also, do you consider Garth Webber's *Get A Grip On Blues* a good representation of your drumming? Finally, how can I purchase your solo CD, *Soaring*?

Keep up the great drumming, and thank you for the inspiration. **Brian Jezuit**

A Thank you so much for the nice compliments! I don't tune my drums to any specific pitches. Not on purpose, anyway. Still, if you tap on any 12" tom in my studio, it'll be the same pitch as all the others. I guess there's a tone that I hear in each drum when I'm tuning it that really sings. That's what I go for. I don't use a tuning fork or piano or any other pitch device.

I recorded Garth Webber's *Get A Grip On Blues* quite a long time ago. Garth is a *great* guitar player. That was a blues record, so I just played what I felt was appropriate for the music. So I guess that's as good a representation of my *blues* playing as anything else. But I've played on many projects since then that I might sound very different on. My discography can be found on my Web site, www.hilaryjones.com. It includes *Soaring*, which you can order from my site. I'm off the road for a while now, so I'm beginning work on my follow-up to *Soaring*. It's gonna be fun!

Repeat Bar
A Classic Quote From MD's Past

"I'm aware that there are things I do that are unique to me, and there are some things I've gotten from other drummers that are not unique at *all*. Those that are unique I try to develop; maybe that's how an individual style is formed. You find your own slant."

Jazz great **Bill Stewart**, March 1996

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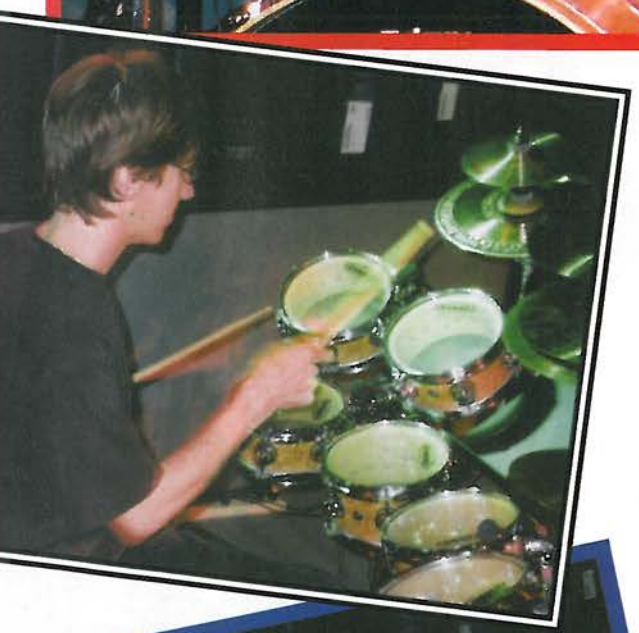

Chad Wackerman

Back Stateside

After living in Sydney, Australia for the past ten years, Chad Wackerman has moved back to his native California. But apparently his time in Australia was good for him. "It made me take charge of my career," he says. "I was able to be a bandleader there." But the changing musical market prompted the move. "My bass player, Leon Gaer, and I composed library music for TV and radio. The company we wrote for was bought up by BMG, who decided not to do music in Australia anymore. I also wanted to do more drum clinics, but the big stores there now have festivals only once a year. So it was time to move."

Since moving back, Chad has done a clinic tour with Terry Bozzio. "I'm the luckiest drummer in the world getting to play with Terry," Chad says. "We went out and improvised two forty-five-minute sets each night. After the first show, Terry said, 'We're getting away with murder!' He's stretched out with his massive new kit. For me, it's like playing with a band. After our last tour, I felt I didn't have enough notes, so I added some piccolo toms. It's been really fun."

Wackerman also recently re-teamed with guitarist Allan Holdsworth and bassist Jimmy Johnson to do a short Paiste clinic tour. "What I admire about Allan is that he's always progressing and challenging himself," the drummer says. "His compositions are deep and organic. Because Allan doesn't read music, he thinks in phrases, not numbers. So there are a lot of odd-time bars in his music. It's still an amazing joy to play with him. And Paiste's new Dark Energy cymbals are perfect for me. They combine the Traditional tone with the Signature brightness. I'm inspired by them."

Chad's also excited about his latest self-released band CD, *Legs Eleven* (available direct from www.chadwackerman.com). "I played some percussion vignettes between the tunes, using piccolo toms, a Paiste percussion set, and lots of percussion sounds." Chad again composed all of the songs, recording things at his former home studio in Sydney.

In summing up the busy past three months, Chad says, "It's great to be back."

Michael Bettine

Strung Out's Jordan Burns Punk Attitude, Prog Chops

"You can put a Rush record on and steal a drum fill *today*," says Strung Out drummer Jordan Burns. "It's endless just how many drum fills you can steal from Neil Peart."

Weaned on a strict diet of Peart ("My number-one influence, for sure"), Burns has been constantly working to blend his progressive nature with the raw aggression of early SoCal punk drummers like Chuck Biscuits, Lucky Lehrer, and Derek O'Brien. He's been following this recipe in Strung Out since he joined in 1993, and it's paid off for the band, which performs melodic hardcore punk with a definite metal edge. "I think my playing style really helped make the whole package complete," the drummer says.

Growing up in Southern California, Burns performed in a handful of local acts before settling in with Strung Out. However, joining the act meant immediately rising to some rather tough challenges. That's because after only six rehearsals, Burns found himself in a recording studio, cutting the band's debut full-length.

Fast-forward just over a decade, with countless tours and several hundred thousand albums sold, and you'll find Burns on Strung Out's latest, *Exile In Oblivion*. His distinct agility, knack for precise rolls, comfortably double-timed grooves, and unrestrained power are all signature traits that he admits took some dedicated practice time and experience. Burns also credits some of his double bass education to Tommy Aldridge's classic drum video. And he points to a few modern punk drummers—NOFX's Erik Sandin, Pennywise's Byron McMackin, and Josh Freese—for his more recent inspiration.

Exile does feature the most double-kick action found in the Strung Out catalog. "I had to really work on my double-kick skills," he notes. "The kicks are just flying on this record, and I had to brush up on my skills for that. It's just something you can't stop practicing.

"I can almost relate it to riding a dirt bike," says the drummer, who's an avid motocross racer. Burns even owns his own team, MotoXXX. "The best way to train for riding is to ride. I feel the same way about drumming. When I practice and work on endurance, I try to play all of the songs in our set in a row, as if it was a show. It can be a tough job, and you have to prepare for it."

For more information on all of Burns' activities, check out www.strungout.com and www.motoxxx.com.

Waleed Rashidi

Greg Glenn

Pieter Van Hattem

Interpol's Sam Fogarino Rock 'N' Roll Antics

Drums are the heart of rock 'n' roll—even Huey Lewis will cop to that. So why were the first forty seconds of Interpol's 2002 debut, *Turn On The Bright Lights*, missing drums? Why was it nothing but dawdling melodic guitar and synth? It's as if the band doesn't even know how to kick off a proper rock 'n' roll record.

"It's not ambiguous. The basis of this band definitely comes from a melodic standpoint," says drummer Sam Fogarino. "It kind of took a while for me to figure out how I could interact with melody without taking away or stepping on what sucks the listener into Interpol."

Still, Fogarino is a rock drummer and, like his forefathers, wants to bloody a few skins on occasion. So when it came time to record *Bright Lights*' follow-up, *Antics*, he reminded his bandmates what drives rock. The difference between the two albums is clearly audible. While retaining much of the debut's moodiness, *Antics* is driven by the drummer's energetic sensibilities.

"When I joined the band, half the songs from *Bright Lights* were written already," says Fogarino. "I could change the drum parts around a little bit, but the songs were fully realized. But it was different with *Antics*."

With Fogarino helping to write and arrange the new material, *Antics* has more force, more crush. This doesn't mean that the drummer's turning Interpol into a Zeppelin tribute band. But new tunes like "Not Even Jail" and "Slow Hands" have added more power to the band's live show.

Interpol has spent the last six months touring America, Europe, and Japan, and even from behind his kit, Fogarino has peeked out to see audiences everywhere loving a more punk, less brooding band. "When you're a drummer in a band like Interpol, you've got to look for the right moment to shout really loud and still be complementary," he says. "It's still very much a challenge, and I think that's what will keep my interest for a long time."

Jed Gottlieb

Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey's

Jason Smart

A Thinking Man's Drummer

Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey demands a lot from twenty-seven-year-old drummer Jason Smart—big ears, great hands, a large vocabulary, and a sense of humor to boot. "We're trying to make music that excites us on a daily basis, and to create something new," Smart says. "A lot of times the drums are the focal point to make changes in the music, to switch around different feels and stuff. We take those sketches of songs, and probably eighty to ninety percent of it is us improvising every night."

The new Jacob Fred Jazz Odyssey album (their fourth national release) is titled *Walking With Giants*. "It's our humble offering to our heroes, like Wayne Shorter, Duke Ellington, and John Coltrane," Smart explains. The CD is also dedicated to the late Elvin Jones. While showing his respect for the great jazz drummers on *Giants*, Smart also plays some thunderous rock—and a wild tango. "For jazz to grow," the drummer insists, "it has to add some world elements and other styles. I've always been into drumming as an art form, so some of my favorite musicians are Ringo, Levon Helm, and Jim Keltner. Guys like that are just as exciting to me as Tony Williams and Elvin Jones."

Smart grew up in Ohio and was influenced by The Beatles, Rush, The Police, and Led Zeppelin. Teachers introduced him to the music of Art Blakey, John Coltrane, and Thelonious Monk, and he studied drums at the University Of Cincinnati College Conservatory Of Music. "This band was what I'd been looking for," Smart states. "The whole idea of jazz is very cool because it works on the independence of your limbs, and it's very conversational. The moment where you feel the group is really listening, focusing, and speaking to each other—well, there's nothing else like that."

During time off from the Jazz Odyssey, Smart has recently been touring with keyboardist Robert Walter and saxman Cochemea Gastelum. "That's been fun because Robert and Cochemea are encyclopedias of that old soul-funk stuff." For more on Smart and the Jazz Odyssey, check out www.jfjo.com.

Robin Tolleson

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The North Mississippi All-Stars'

Cody Dickinson Defining An Artist

"It's a misconception that blues music is simple and easy to play," says Cody Dickinson of The North Mississippi All-Stars. "When you start dealing with the swing element and the feel, it gets tough. It's much harder than straight-8th rock." Having spent his early years watching studio legends Jim Keltner and Roger Hawkins record with his father, famed producer Jim Dickinson, it's not surprising that Cody understands the importance of feel.

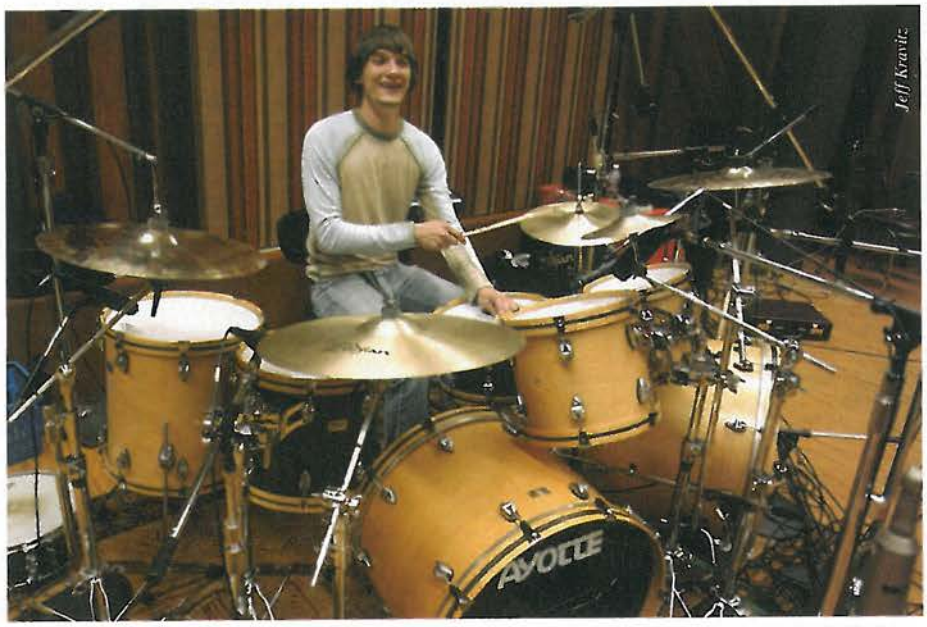
But the drummer's not only rooted in the blues tradition. He's reinventing it, bringing many contemporary influences into the mix. "I get a lot of ideas from rap beats," says Cody. "I've also been listening to DJ Screw and Lil' Flip. I love that stuff. It's very rhythmic." On the All-Stars' recent live CD, *Hill Country Revue*, Cody points out the track "Be So Glad," stating, "I'm doing 32nd notes on the hi-hat, like a drum machine."

Cody has also developed a unique approach to double bass. "I was into Slipknot for double bass," he explains. "But I came up with a fresh idea after hearing the Rising Star Fife & Drum Band's bass drummer, Otha Andre Evans. He gets these insane patterns going, similar to second-line drumming from New Orleans." Other members of the Rising Stars include snare drummers Aubrey Turner and Rodney Evans.

Listen to the All-Stars' "Shimmy She Wobble" to hear Cody apply these ideas to double bass. "It starts with a marching beat from the Rising Stars," the drummer explains. "With my feet I'm emulating the sound of two hands on a marching bass drum." To emphasize this unique approach, Cody uses different-sized bass drums. "Jordison from Slipknot will tell you, they spend hours trying to match the drums. I *want* them to be different."

Speaking of different, don't be surprised when you hear Dickinson playing a one-of-a-kind electric washboard, given to him by John Cane in Atlanta. "The electric washboard is revolutionary," says Cody. "It plugs in like a guitar, so I can use all these effects." Since debuting the unique instrument in 2000, Cody's often recognized as "The Washboard Guy." As he jokes, "My drumming has definitely given me a career, but the washboard has defined me as an artist."

Michael Dawson



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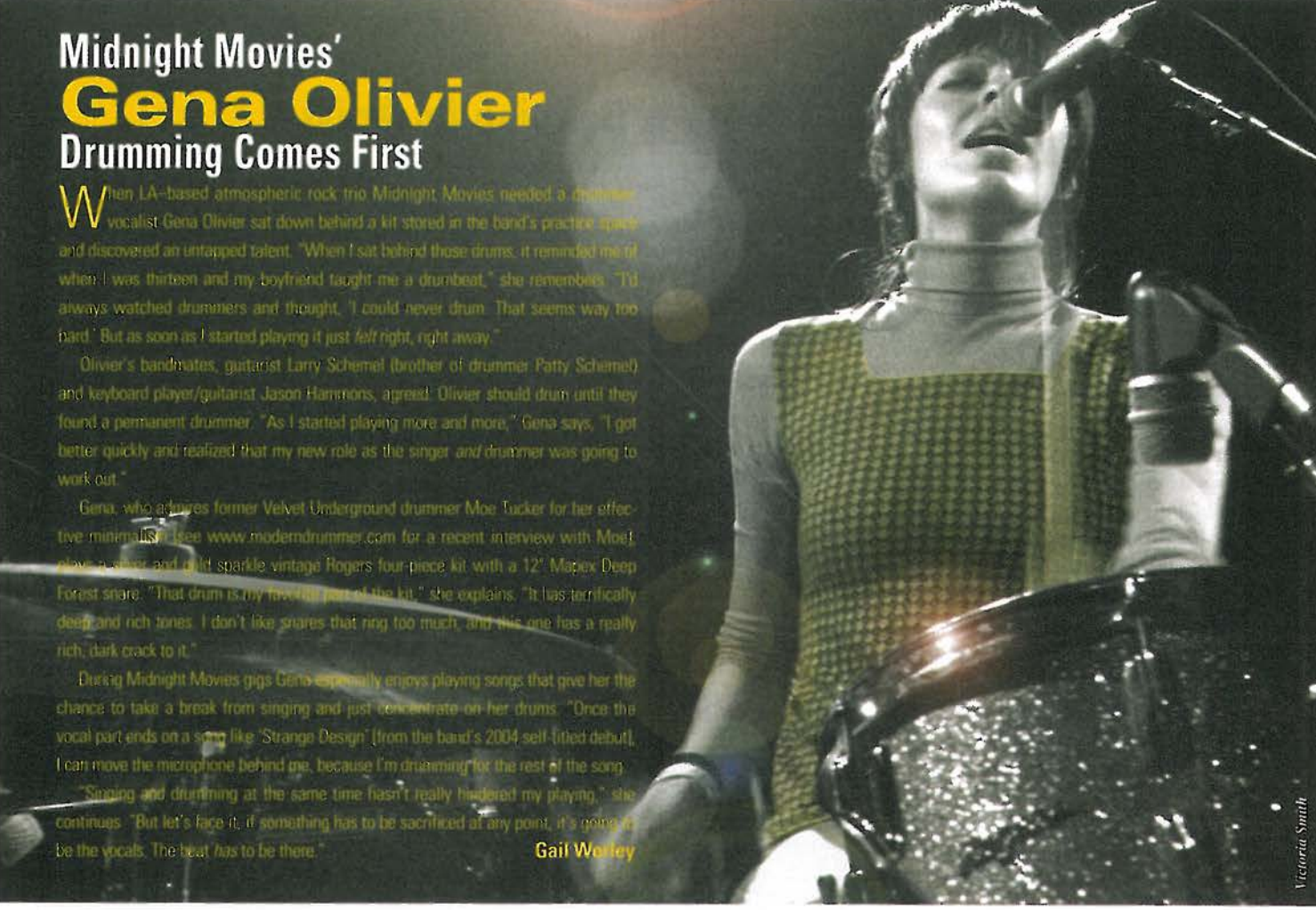
Midnight Movies' Gena Olivier

Drumming Comes First



When LA–based atmospheric rock trio Midnight Movies needed a drummer, vocalist Gena Olivier sat down behind a kit stored in the band's practice space and discovered an untapped talent. "When I sat behind those drums, it reminded me of when I was thirteen and my boyfriend taught me a drumbeat," she remembers. "I'd always watched drummers and thought, 'I could never drum. That seems way too hard.' But as soon as I started playing it just *felt* right, right away."

Olivier's bandmates, guitarist Larry Schemel (brother of drummer Patty Schemel) and keyboard player/guitarist Jason Hammons, agreed. Olivier should drum until they found a permanent drummer. "As I started playing more and more," Gena says, "I got better quickly and realized that my new role as the singer *and* drummer was going to work out."

Gena, who admires former Velvet Underground drummer Moe Tucker for her effective minimalism (see www.moderndrummer.com for a recent interview with Moe), plays a silver and gold sparkle vintage Rogers four-piece kit with a 12" Majex Deep Forest snare. "That drum is my favorite part of the kit," she explains. "It has terrifically deep and rich tones. I don't like snares that ring too much, and this one has a really rich, dark crack to it."

During Midnight Movies gigs Gena especially enjoys playing songs that give her the chance to take a break from singing and just concentrate on her drums. "Once the vocal part ends on a song like 'Strange Design' [from the band's 2004 self-titled debut], I can move the microphone behind me, because I'm drumming for the rest of the song."

"Singing and drumming at the same time hasn't really hindered my playing," she continues. "But let's face it, if something has to be sacrificed at any point, it's going to be the vocals. The beat *has* to be there."

Gail Worley

Victoria Smith

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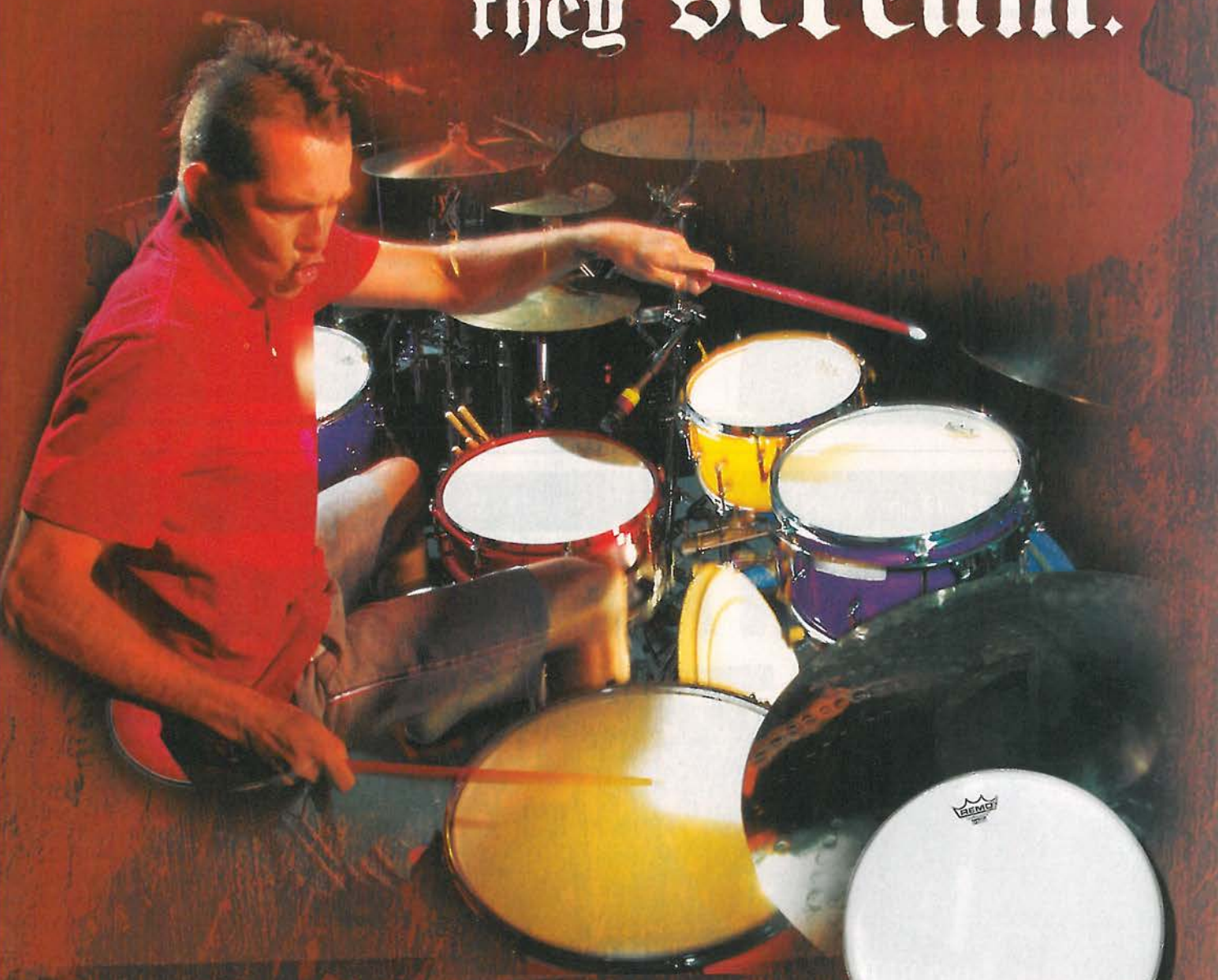

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DRUM DATES This month's important events in drumming history

Dave Tough was born on 4/26/07,
Lionel Hampton on 4/12/09,
Tito Puente on 4/20/23,
Bobby Rosengarden on 4/23/24,
Modern Drummer founder **Ron Spagnardi** on 4/25/43,
Average White Band's **Robbie McIntosh** on 4/25/50,
and **Jeff Porcaro** on 4/1/54.

Buddy Rich passed away on 4/2/87,
educator **Frank Malabe** on 4/21/94,
Cozy Powell on 4/5/98,
Carlos Vega on 4/7/98,
Nazareth drummer **Darrell Sweet** on 4/30/99,
and **Claudio Slon** on 4/16/02.

In April of 1969, Cactus (with **Carmine Appice** on drums) records their debut album.

During the week of 4/21–26/04, **Elvin Jones** makes his last public appearances at Yoshi's in Oakland, California.

Happy Birthday!

Joe Porcaro
(educator, LA studio): 4/29/30

Jake Hanna
(jazz great): 4/4/31

Jim Keltner
(studio great): 4/27/42

Clyde Stubblefield
(James Brown): 4/18/43

Steve Gadd
(drumming legend): 4/9/45

Doug "Cosmo" Clifford
(Credence Clearwater Revival): 4/24/45

Bill Kreutzmann
(The Grateful Dead): 4/7/46

Steve Ferrone
(Tom Petty, session great): 4/25/50

Max Weinberg
(Bruce Springsteen, Conan O'Brien): 4/13/51

Bruce Gary
(The Knack): 4/7/52

Narada Michael Walden
(fusion and session great): 4/23/52

Denny Fongheiser
(studio vet): 4/21/59

Chris Mars
(The Replacements): 4/26/61

Mike Portnoy
(Dream Theater): 4/20/67

Patty Schemel
(Hole): 4/24/67

Stan Frazier
(Sugar Ray): 4/23/68

Aaron Comess
(Spin Doctors): 4/24/68

Greg Eklund
(Everclear): 4/18/70

Shane Evans
(Collective Soul): 4/26/70

Hey, Mike, have a piece of cake instead!

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NEWS

Pete Riley is on *Vivacitas: Live At Glasgow 2002*, by a reunited Nice featuring original bandmembers Keith Emerson, Lee Jackson, and Brian Davison.

Josh Trager is on *Real Live!* by Frank Marino & Mahogany Rush.

Bogie Bowles has joined Kenny Wayne Shepherd's new band. They are currently on tour supporting Kenny's latest disc, *The Place You're In.*

Guillermo E. Brown is on Mike Ladd's *Negrophilia.*

Chuck Bernstein is on *Think Of One* by Monk's Music Trio.

Bob Weiner is on *Greener Than Blue*, the latest by pianist Claire Ritter.

Peter Erskine is on Diana Krall's DVD *Live At The Montreal Jazz Festival.*

Fred Eltringham is in the studio with The Wallflowers, recording a new CD due out soon. He can also be heard on the recent Tears For Fears release, *Everybody Loves A Happy Ending*, plus new discs by The Honorary Title, Ben Kweller, and Anne Heaton.

Get well soon: The 69 Eyes had to cancel shows in Finland and Sweden after drummer **Jussi 69** was rushed to the hospital with a perforated appendix. Their new album, *Devils*, was recently released.

Steve Williams has been busy recording with Michael Tocher and David Byrne. He's also been performing with the Broadway road tour of *The Three Mo Tenors.*

Daniel Adair is on the new 3 Doors Down CD, *Seventeen Days.*

You can find **Ben Graves** (Murderdolls) and **Chris Slade** (Asia, AC/DC, The Firm) on legendary rock producer Bob Kulick's all-star Iron Maiden tribute album.

Craig Nunenmacher is on tour with Black Label Society.

MD Radio **To hear some of the artists mentioned in this month's *Update*, go to MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com.**

Eddie Bayers and **Paul Leim** are currently sharing the drum chair in the house band at the Grand Ole Opry.

Performing at the 2004 American Music Awards were **Craig Macintyre** with Josh Groban, **Sean Paddock** with Kenny Chesney, **Dave McAfee** with Toby Keith, and **Matt Flynn** with Maroon 5.

Jose Pasillas of Incubus is set to appear on the soundtrack to the upcoming Xbox video game, *Halo 2.*

Stu Nevitt (of Shadowfax fame) is working with The Mike Reilly Band. He recorded their *Ol' Knuckleheads* record last year (with **Tony Braunagel** producing). For more info, go to www.reillyband.com.

Ches Smith (Theory Of Ruin, Mr. Bungle) is on *Bebop Fantasy* by Good For Cows.

David Kemper, **Mick Fleetwood**, **Jay Nazz**, **Rick Marotta**, **Fred Eltringham**, **Noah Shain**, **Pete Yorn**, **David Lovering**, and **Jim Keltner** are all on the Warren Zevon tribute CD, *Enjoy Every Sandwich: The Songs Of Warren Zevon.*

Sam Loeffler is on tour with Chevelle, promoting their new album, *This Type Of Thinking (Could Do Us In).*

Mike Malinin is on the Goo Goo Dolls' concert DVD/CD, *Live In Buffalo, July 4, 2004.*

Rich Mercurio and **Diego Voglino** are sharing drum duties on live dates with singer-songwriter Wendy Starland.

Fran Azzarto, **Dennis Diken**, **Pete Yorn**, **Dean Butterworth**, **Pete Thomas**, and **Larry Mullen** are all on Nancy Sinatra's self-titled CD.

Eric Stock (not Sock, as reported in our February issue) is the drummer with Stroke 9.

And finally, congratulations to Zildjian's **Paul Francis** and his wife, Carrie, on the recent birth of their son, Ryan Paul.

FROM BIRTH...

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Years Experience: 8 years

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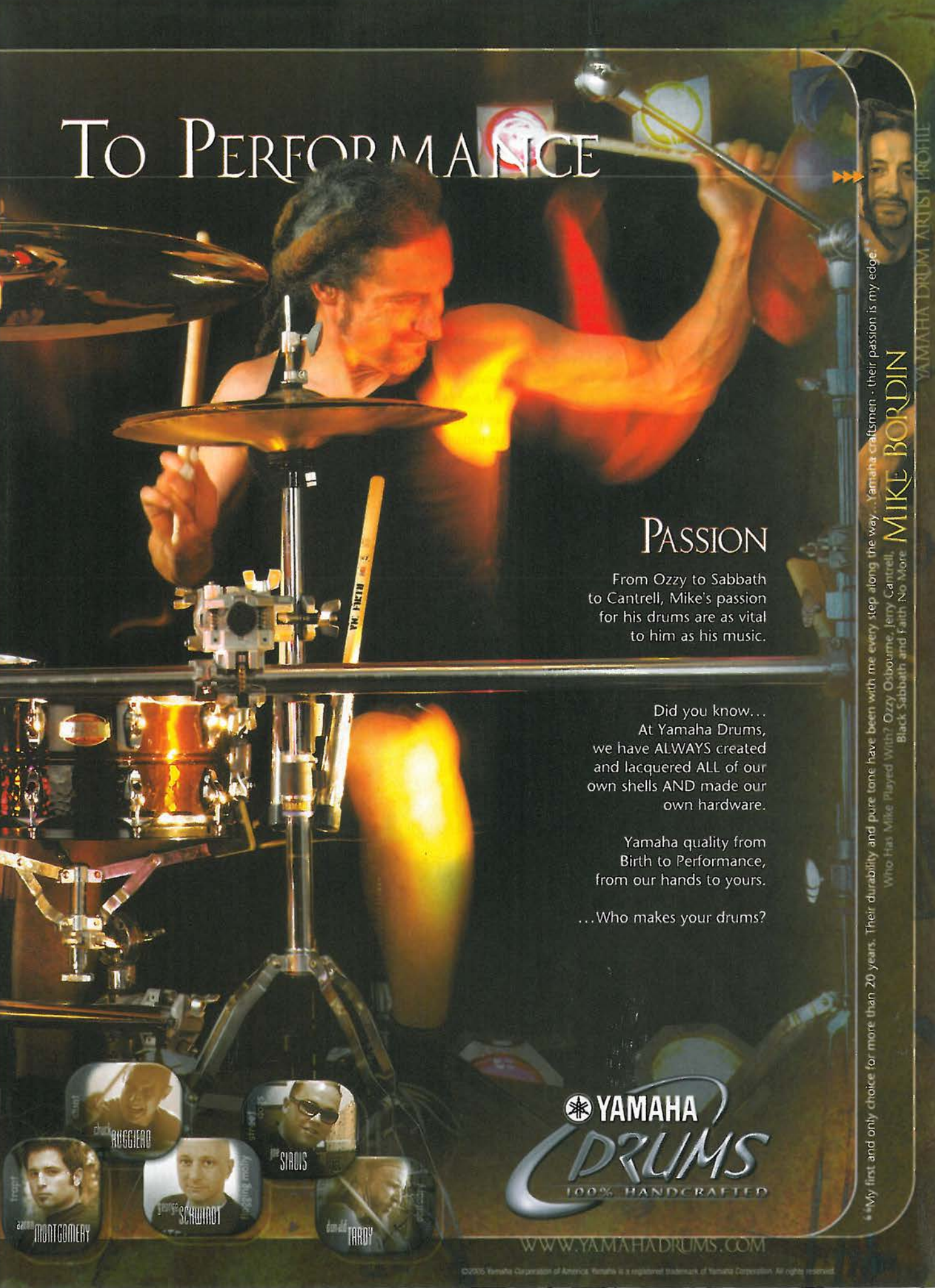
Absolute Birch Custom in Cherry Wood with Mike Bordin Signature Snare Drum

ARTISTS IN THE KNOW



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Odery Drums

Sights And Sounds From The Rainforest

HITS

beautiful finishes and sounds

easy to tune and work with

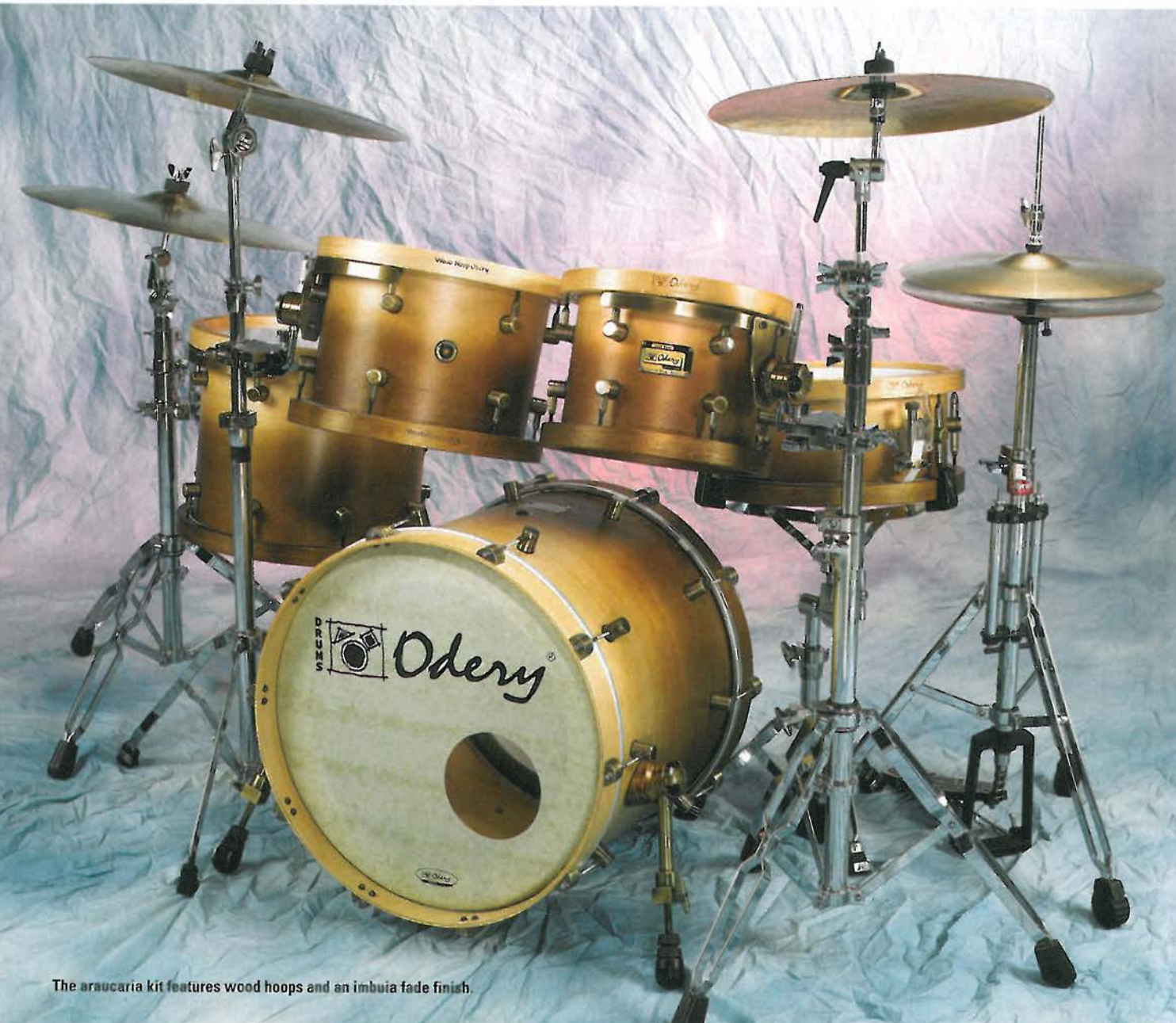
MISSES

aluminum hoops and brass fittings make imbuia drums heavy

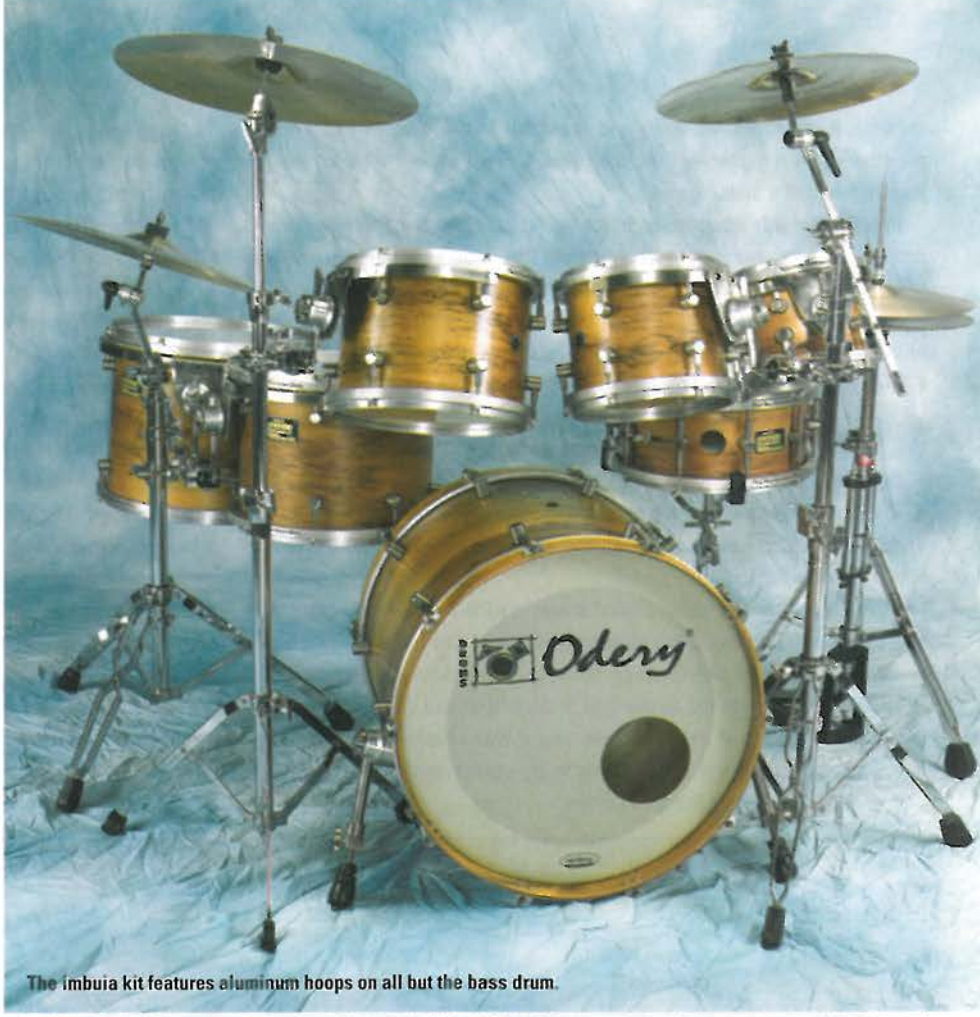
Text by Chap Ostrander
Photos by Jim Esposito

In May of 2003, I had the pleasure of seeing the legendary Airto Moreira in performance at the MD Festival Weekend. Besides being dazzled by the many facets of Airto's playing, I remember being struck by the clarity of his drum sound. And not only did the drums sound good, they *looked* good as well. That was my first encounter with Odery drums from Brazil.

Odery drums are handmade from araucaria and imbuia, which are woods indigenous to the southern regions of Brazil. Araucaria comes from reforestation areas, which allows the trees to be harvested when they are between forty-five and eighty years old. Imbuia trees, on the other hand, have a lifespan of up to *nine hundred* years. Brazil's environmental regulations are so strict that the only imbuia trees that can be cut into timber are those that fall due to the forces of nature. Both woods exhibit beautiful grain patterns and textures. Odery sent one kit made from each kind of wood, plus an Airto Moreira Signature snare.



The araucaria kit features wood hoops and an imbuia fade finish.



The imbuia kit features aluminum hoops on all but the bass drum.

The Araucaria Kit

The araucaria kit came with a stunning imbuia fade finish. The kit also featured imbuia wooden hoops, as well as hardware finished in antique bronze. I personally love the look of a stain finish that fades from light to dark—including the colors of the wood hoops. The toms were 8x10 and 9x12 (each 4-ply, with six lugs per head) and 12x14 (4-ply, eight lugs per head). The 16x20 bass drum was 6-ply, with ten lugs per head, and the 6x13 snare was 6-ply, with eight lugs per head.

The snare was shocking in its cutting power, with clarity and crack. The wood hoops made for clear, strong cross-stick playing and fat, woody rimshots. The toms were pure and smooth in their sound. The drums proved very easy to tune, and the tone that I tuned them to was projected very clearly when I played them.

Odery drums come standard with Evans heads. Rack and floor toms are fitted with G2 Clear double-ply batter heads and Genera Resonant heads underneath. Bass drums get G2 batters and EQ3 Black front heads. The snare drums come with Uno 58 coated batters and Hazy 300 snare-side heads.

The araucaria bass drum produced lots of ring, and I knew that I'd have to do something to muffle it. I replaced the G2 batter with an Evans EMAD batter. Once I tuned it up, the sound of the drum was round and sweet. It could have punch if needed, but it really generated more tone.

The imbuia snare drum features Odery's Air Vent system. An inner shell can be rotated to open or close four large vent holes in the drum.

The Imbuia Kit

Our second review kit was made from imbuia wood, with a natural waxed finish. It was fitted with hard aluminum hoops, as well as hardware given a brushed steel finish. The toms were 7x8 (4-ply, five lugs per head), 8x10 and 9x12 (4-ply, six lugs per head), and 11x14 and 13x16 (4-ply, eight lugs per head). The 18x22 bass drum was 6-ply, with ten lugs per head, while the 6½x14 snare featured two 8-ply shells and ten lugs per head.

The snare drum features two separate shells—one within the other. These twin shells are part of the Air Control System invented by drummer Renato Siqueira and developed by Odery. This system lets you custom-tailor the sound of the drum by changing the opening of the four 1¾"-diameter air vents located around the shell. You loosen a rod and rotate the inner shell to partially or fully close the vents, which, in turn, changes the character of the drum sound. The Air Control System is available on snare drums that are 5½" deep or deeper.

While playing the drum on a gig with the holes in the fully open position, I heard lots of volume and snare sound. When the vents were fully closed, the drum took on a more contained sound: dry, with lots of attack and clarity. Because the shells can be positioned to set the vents anywhere between fully closed and fully open, the drum's sound could be tailored to work with many types of music.

I brought the imbuia kit on a gig that required some fairly strong playing, and the voices coming from all of the components were very cutting and clear. I usually comment about snare drums that don't choke up when played louder, but in this case it was true of the whole kit. The bass drum especially seemed to grow in depth and resonance as I played harder. It had *tons* of punch, and just wouldn't quit. While I was first tuning the bass

at home, it rattled the windows and shook the walls. When I had a friend play the kit on a gig while I left the room, I could hear the bass (and the snare) from half a building away.

In a side-by-side comparison of the two Odery kits, the araucaria drums produced a pure, warm tone when struck. The imbuia set had more attack, followed by low overtones that deepened the character of the sound. This is mostly due to the fact that araucaria is slightly softer than maple, and possesses its warmth. The harder imbuia shells are more reflective, providing greater volume and projection for a more aggressive sound.

The Airto Signature Snare

I also tested the 6½x14 Airto Moreira Signature snare. The shell is made of araucaria wood with a Moonlight Lacquer finish. The brass lugs are anodized in natural aluminum, and the hoops are cast aluminum with a black anodized finish.

I used the Airto snare for a local show, and the whole orchestra was impressed with it. It had great sensitivity when played quietly, and it could speak with plenty of power when necessary—without sacrificing snare response. It impressed me as the kind of drum that can change one's playing. It smoothed out all my press rolls, and it was crystal clear in articulation. Don't borrow one of these drums to try unless you can deal with the pain of separation when the time comes.

The Airto Signature snare drum is made of araucaria wood with a Moonlight Lacquer finish.

Special Appointments

All of the drums feature lugs fashioned from solid brass, with a nylon gasket between them and the shell to minimize contact. The single lugs on the toms and bass drums attach to the shells with a single screw each. A spring pin extends through the lug to hold the threaded receiver in place. The other end of the pin goes through a hole in the gasket and into an indentation in the shell. The result is only one hole through the shell per lug, with minimized contact between the two. The suspension mounts for the toms fit onto the tension rods between the lugs and the hoops.

The double-ended lugs on the snare drums still had only one point where they attached to the shell. Pins underneath the central brass fitting hold the threaded receivers in place, yet allow them to move slightly, minimizing the chance of cross-threading the tension rod. All three of our review snares had Nickel Drumworks strainers and butt plates.

The bass drums have solid brass fittings fastened onto the hoops. The tension rods pass through these fittings into the lugs, eliminating the need for claws. The tension rods were fitted with nylon washers to ease tuning and eliminate rattling.

Odery's unique tightening knob—shown here on the bass drum spur—is also used on tom mounts. Notice as well the clawless lug system used on Odery's bass drum hoops.

The bass drum spurs fold against the shell, and have aluminum mounts on the shells. The wing nuts and spurs are die-cast brass. The Odery wing nut features an interesting design. It's round and flat, with three indentations for grip. It seems to melt against the shell, and it's comfortable to operate. Odery doesn't make stands or tom hardware. Rather, they offer mounts made by Pearl or Gibraltar.

All of the brass fittings and mounts on these kits make the drums heavy to move around. This is especially true of the imbuia kit, with its oversized aluminum hoops. If you gig in different locations each night, you'll have to deal with that weight factor as part of owning one of these kits.

Final Thoughts

Odery seems totally dedicated to producing their products at the highest level. They combine old-world craftsmanship with the latest technology to ensure quality control. Our review kits were among the most beautiful looking *and* sounding drums that I have experienced. Watch for your chance to see and hear them in person.

THE NUMBERS

Araucaria wood-hoop drumset **$2,800**
Includes 8x10, 9x12, and 12x14 toms, a 16x20 bass drum, and a 6x13 snare drum

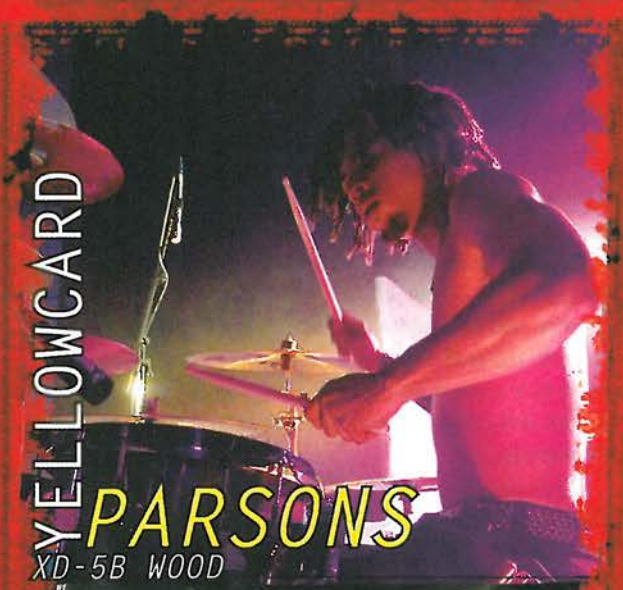
Imbuia aluminum-hoop drumset **$5,033**
Includes 7x8, 8x10, 9x12, 11x14, and 13x16 toms, an 18x22 bass drum, and a 6½x14 snare drum

Airto Moreira Signature 6½x14 snare ..... **$ 780**

Note: Odery drums are just beginning to enter the US market. The figures above reflect estimated retail prices from US drum shops once a dealer network is established. In the meantime, drums can also be ordered directly from Odery. Contact the company for further information.

USA: Arnaldo Busack, (917) 561-2444. Brazil: (011) 55 19 3278-1788.
Www.odery.com.

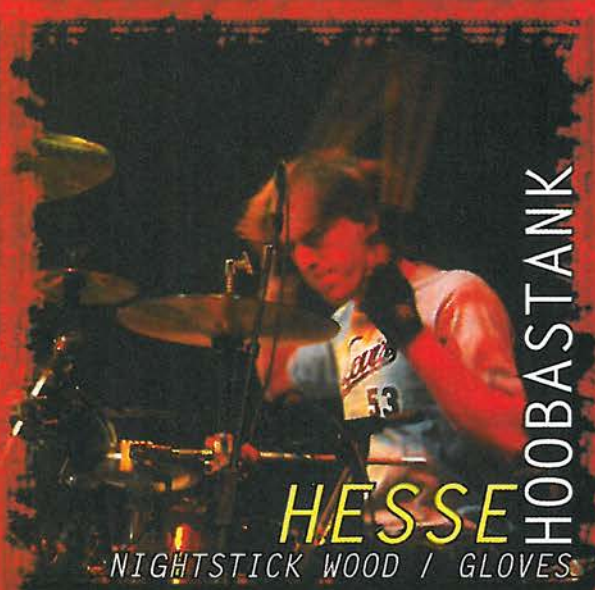
MEET VATER'S QUALITY CONTROL TEAM



YELLOWCARD

PARSONS

XD-5B WOOD



HOOBASTANK

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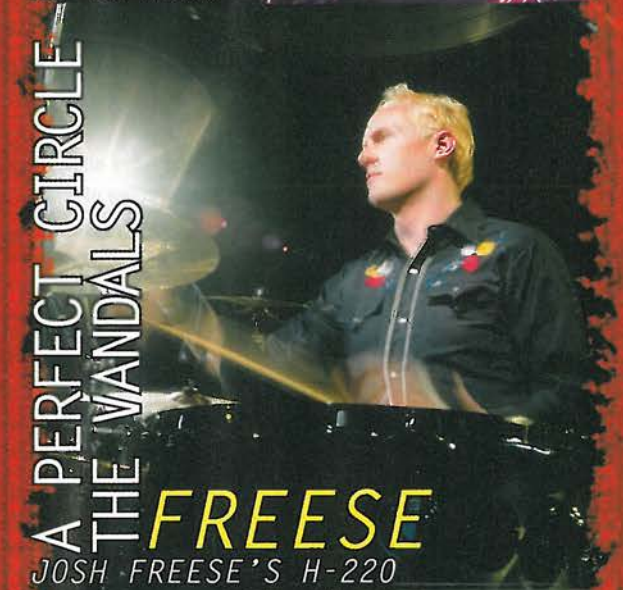
NIGHTSTICK WOOD / GLOVES

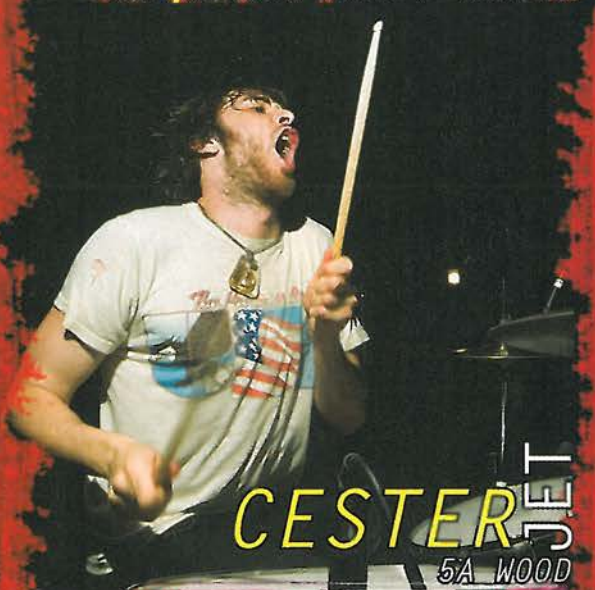


A PERFECT CIRCLE

THE VANDALS

FREESE

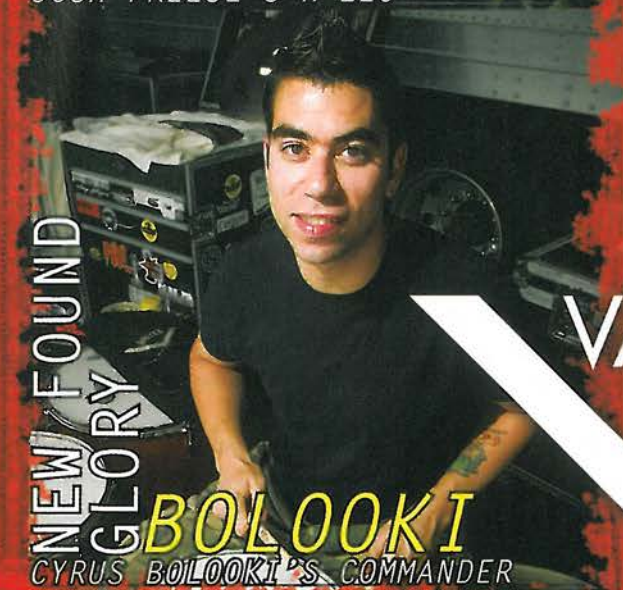
JOSH FREESE'S H-220



JET

CESTER

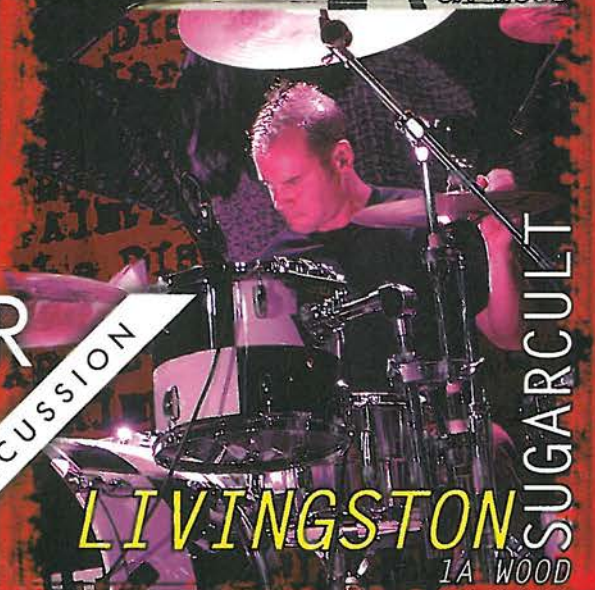
5A WOOD



NEW FOUND GLORY

BOLOOKI

CYRUS BOLOOKI'S COMMANDER



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Istanbul Agop Special Edition Jazz Rides And Trash Hits

Bridging The Traditional And The Innovative

HITS
alternating lathing yields a multitude of sonic results

Trash Hit cymbals produce intense sound

MISSES
ride cymbals have a sameness between sizes

by Will Romano

20" Special Edition Jazz Ride

Like its namesake city, the Istanbul Agop company has a rich past and a colorful present. The company has been producing cymbals for twenty-five years, combining manufacturing techniques that date back hundreds of years with innovative contemporary ideas. Two of the latest results are the Special Edition Jazz Ride and the Trash Hit.

Each cymbal we received for review was created from the company's "specially formulated" alloy and hand-manufacturing process, and each features unique lathing patterns and designs. Our review batch was accompanied by a black, multi-pocket cymbal bag (one zippered flap for sticks, another to hold smaller cymbals, and a main pouch) that comfortably held five of the seven cymbals without being too heavy to manage.

The SE Jazz Rides: Unearthing Treasures

Our review group contained one each of the four Special Edition Jazz rides: 19", 20", 21", and 22". It's impossible to review these cymbals without talking about their alternating bands of tighter and wider lathing. The pronounced lathe lines encircling their top surfaces reminded me of satellite photos of contoured, excavated earthworks leading to some ancient burial site. Their "dirty," deeply dimpled (hand-hammered) undersides gave me the impression that I had unearthed artifacts from the time of Constantine The Great.

According to the manufacturer, the lathing patterns on the SE Jazz rides allow for a high level of stick definition and "expressive character." Having played some of Istanbul Agop's other offerings in the past, I was eager to learn whether these new cymbals could provide a combination of old-world presence and cutting-edge performance, and if their striking lathing design genuinely affected their sound and projection.

Digging In

Istanbul Agop says that it might take drummers some time to figure out exactly how to caress the SE cymbals in order to achieve a specific desired sound. This may be true in some cases; they certainly had hidden qualities waiting to be discovered. But overall, I was taken by how well the cymbals' bright overtones walked hand-in-hand with an undercurrent of heavy, ancient-sounding "gonginess." I played the SE Jazz rides in settings where the music was a mix of classical, jazz, rock, and world. I was impressed by how they neither overpowered nor fell into the background of the music.

I took the 19" and 22" rides to a recording session, and found their clarity, heft, and crispness right on the mark. My miking setup included one mic' right above the ride. In playbacks and on the eventual CD tracks, even my slightest ride strokes cut through, with highlights and "low-lights" (sonic depths) registering equally clear in the mix. During the session I switched back and forth between wood-tip sticks, brushes, and rods. Each produced a very different effect, though the common threads of clarity and sonic layering seemed to bond each performance.

In a separate practice session, I found the 21" SE ride to be a delightfully raucous cymbal, although I had to dig into it to bolster its volume projection. In the process of testing this particular model, I found tiny patches of cymbal surface on which to pinpoint the attack of my drumstick's tip. On the other hand, the bells of the 20" and 21" cymbals rang out clearly and loudly—more so than I had expected for "jazz" rides. I could only credit this "spotty" performance (meaning different parts of the cymbal yielding different sonic results) to the alternating lathing process used in making these rides.

While I enjoyed the acoustic character of the SE Jazz rides, I was somewhat surprised by the sameness of their performance from size to size. That is, I didn't hear much difference between the 19" and the 20", or between the 21" and 22" ride. I found this odd within a group of hand-made cymbals. It made me question why Istanbul created four models that were so close in size, rather than a smaller range with greater size variation (such as 18", 20", and 22") that could better underscore the sonic dips and summits of each item in the series.

The Trash Hits: Hello Dali

To be honest, I was more than a little skeptical about the sound I could garner from the 20", 21", and 22" Trash Hit cymbals that we were sent. As each of these misshapen slabs of metal took its turn seesawing on my cymbal stand, they seemed more like something out of a Salvador Dali painting, or an old vinyl record accidentally left on a hot radiator. I was further bewildered when I noticed rough, uneven edges with what appeared to be excess material on some of them. Istanbul AGOP wouldn't divulge the process by which they created these cymbals. But a spokesperson for the company explained that the extra material on the ragged edges theoretically could help to focus the sound of the cymbal and place it in the lower registers.

20" Trash Hit

With a name like "Trash Hit," I would have guessed that these cymbals would have all the musical subtlety of garbage-can lids. I was wrong—at least partly. Depending on the spot I chose to attack, the cymbals produced a variety of "clinks," "clangs," "kishes," and "crashes." The bells acted as targets, presenting tiny, shiny, heavily lathed surfaces for me to zero in on. I could get a more defined "ping" from the cymbals themselves if I played close to the bell.

Playing on the main surface of the Trash Hits produced sounds that were nothing short of explosive. It didn't take much elbow grease for the cymbal to develop a volume overload, and when it reached its maximum decibels, I could hear almost nothing else around me. The sound was *so* loud, in fact, that my sticking patterns were virtually erased by the tremendous, hissing tidal wave of sound. (How's that for covering your tracks!) As I hit the edges of these suckers, my strokes again became lost in the rush: I got nuthin' but "whoosh!"

Though I noticed a slight alternating lathing pattern on these cymbals, I believe the sounds I achieved had less to do with the production process and more to do with the shape (or lack thereof).

While I was impressed with the Trash Hit cymbals, I'm convinced that they are not for every gig. (Or perhaps for *any* gig, depending on your taste.) I think the best applications might be in heavy rock, experimental jazz, or even certain forms of hybrid world music.

On Balance

Whether or not you'd consider these ringed metal platters from Istanbul Agop as innovative will depend largely on your musical taste. (And, in the case of the Trash Hits, on your aural endurance.) Still, they are far from generic, and they offer sounds that can make distinctive additions to your kit at competitive prices.

THE NUMBERS

Special Edition Jazz Rides

19"	$399
20"	$446
21"	$494
22"	$539

Trash Hits

20"	$445
21"	$439
22"	$539
Deluxe Cymbal Bag	$ 95

(213) 624-4264, www.istanbulcymbals.com.

Quick Looks

JS MusicRest Throne Backrest

Over the years, I've frequently cited the advantages of a backrest on a drummer's throne. At the time of this writing, I've been reminded of those advantages first-hand. I've been playing a local high-school musical, which has involved long hours of rehearsal and a lot of downtime during performance. Without the backrest on my throne, I'm sure I'd be experiencing a great deal more physical discomfort and fatigue.

Now, it happens that my throne *came* with a backrest. But what if you agree that a backrest would be nice, but you currently have a perfectly good throne that didn't come with one? Do you have to scrap it and buy a brand-new, backrest-equipped model?

No, you don't, thanks to drummer/inventor Jimmy Santopolo. He's created the JS MusicRest, which is a backrest that can be attached to virtually any drum throne. The unit starts with a contoured, L-shaped chrome-steel bar that attaches to a clamp at its bottom. This clamp, in turn, attaches to the shaft of your throne beneath its existing seat. The way these two parts are connected permits forward/backward adjustment.

The L-arm extends behind the seat and upward, and slips into a bracket on the back of a vinyl-covered cushion that measures 14" from top to bottom, and is 7¼" wide and 5½" thick. The bracket on the back of the cushion is equipped with a knob-tightened bolt that allows you to adjust the height of the backrest anywhere along the upper portion of the L-arm.

I tried the JS MusicRest on three different thrones, and it worked just dandy on all of them. It mounted securely, and I was able to adjust it to provide support and comfort over a long period of time. The only cautionary word (which comes direct from Jimmy Santopolo) is that you should always position the tripod of your throne so that one leg is directly beneath the backrest.

Jimmy Santopolo is offering the JS MusicRest directly to drummers at a price of $99.95 plus $10 shipping. You can order online at http://musicrest.bravepages.com, or contact Jimmy for more information at highwaystar54@aol.com.

Rick Van Horn

Tama Cobra Clutch

Next Step For The Hi-Hat?

HITS

permits hands-free hi-hat closure

adjustable for different amounts of closure

MISSES

large and heavy

Text by Rick Van Horn
Photos by Jim Esposito

Tama's Cobra Clutch is a device intended to allow double pedal and double bass drummers to use their feet instead of their hands to put hi-hats into the closed position. In essence, it's a foot-operated replacement for the familiar "drop clutch" used by most double pedal and double bass drummers today.

What Came Before

A traditional drop clutch is very light (most weigh only a few ounces), and it can travel as part of the hi-hat itself. Today's drop clutches operate smoothly and efficiently, requiring just a touch to release the top cymbal.

However, one of the disadvantages of a drop clutch is that it must *be* touched—by the hand or by a drumstick—in order to release the top cymbal. That operation takes the drummer's hand away from the pure act of playing the drums. Also, a drop clutch either holds the top cymbal up, or releases it to sit atop the bottom cymbal. There's no in between, and the tightness of the "closed hi-hat" sound is determined exclusively by how heavy the top cymbal is.

What's New

The Cobra Clutch is operated by the drummer's foot, so there's no interference with what his or her hands are doing. Also, the amount of hi-hat closure can be pre-set, from partially open to tightly closed. As a result, in addition to the familiar closed hi-hat sound, rock drummers can opt to play double bass while having a "sloshy," half-open hi-hat.

As compared to a standard drop clutch, the Cobra Clutch is a massive assembly weighing almost seven pounds. It also needs to be attached to and detached from the hi-hat stand with each use. That's not a major operation; it just involves positioning a holding arm and attaching one multi-clamp. But it's still one more thing to do as part of one's set-up. The unit comes with its own carrying case, which is nice in terms of protection, but does add one more item to your pack-up list.

Mechanically speaking, what the Cobra Clutch does is duplicate what a drummer's foot does on the hi-hat. The assembly features two pedals. The left pedal operates a plunger that holds the footboard of the hi-hat stand down *in place of* the drummer's foot. (You step on the hi-hat footboard and the plunger pedal at the same time to initially position the cymbals.) Adjusting the length of the plunger pre-

The Cobra Clutch attaches to virtually any hi-hat stand.

sets how closed the hi-hats will be. Stepping on the right pedal releases the clutch, which, in turn, retracts the plunger and returns the top cymbal to the "up" position. From a mechanical point of view, it all works just fine.

The tricky part comes in learning how to *make* it work. The Cobra Clutch's pedals are designed to be operated with one's heel. It's going to take any drummer some time to develop the coordination necessary to operate the pedals within the framework of whatever else his or her feet are doing. In that respect, it's not unlike incorporating the operation of a standard drop clutch into what the hands are doing.

Hooking It Up

Tama sent us an Iron Cobra hi-hat to test the Cobra Clutch with, but the unit is designed to work with just about any brand of hi-hat. We also tried it with various Pearl, Gibraltar, and DW models, and it performed well with each.

One thing to be aware of is that the Cobra Clutch pedal assembly is as large as the slave pedal in a double-pedal setup. So it needs the same amount of floor space. Owing to the unit's mechanical design, it must go on the left side of the hi-hat footboard. If you play a three-legged hi-hat with a revolving tripod, and you revolve the legs to make room for a slave bass drum pedal on the *right* side of the hi-hat footboard, there won't be room for the Cobra Clutch on the left side. To use all three pedals, you'd need a two-legged or legless hi-hat stand.

Conclusions

The Cobra Clutch does exactly what it's designed to do: It allows you to lock your hi-hats into a pre-set closed position, and then release them, using your foot instead of your hand. As part of Tama's Iron Cobra pedal series, it's a well-made, heavy-duty unit likely to provide years of service.

Whether the performance options offered by the Cobra Clutch justify the practice that will be required to master its use, the additional handling it will require, and its cost, must be up to the individual drummer. But it's *always* nice to have a choice.

THE NUMBERS

Cobra Clutch, with hard plastic carrying case **$165.99**

(215) 638-8670, www.tama.com.

Even by itself, the Cobra Clutch is a fairly massive assembly.

Noble & Cooley Anniversary Snares

Drums For The Mind's Ear

HITS

light and portable

sharp, crisp crack

highly sensitive

MISSES

throw-offs can be stiff

by Will Romano

In 2004, Noble & Cooley celebrated 150 years as an ongoing entity. They're commemorating this event with two anniversary snare drum models: an SE (Special Edition) blond 7-ply maple snare, and an Alloy Classic cast-aluminum model. Along with black chrome hardware, these drums feature a badge displaying the sleek Noble & Cooley logo, the company's years of service (1854–2004), a serial number, and the proud statement, "Made in the USA."

The design and cosmetic aspects of these drums are understated but elegant. I wondered if their sound quality would mirror that design.

Special Edition

The $5\frac{3}{4}$x13 SE model we were sent came equipped with flanged steel rims, which, according to the company, help produce a "spongy" soft tone. Immediately after taking the drum out of the box, I finger-drummed on the Evans Power Center reverse-dot coated batter head. (There was an Evans 300 hazy snare side on the bottom.) Then I put the drum on a snare stand and struck it a few times. I was immediately impressed by its tone, sensitivity, and volume range.

Special Edition Snare

The first time I really *played* the SE was on a gig in a Gothic-revival church with wooden floors and pews and a large cathedral ceiling. When I took my first swipe at the snare head...*kaboom.* A sonic explosion jolted the audience, my bandmates, and me. (And *I* knew it was coming.)

That stroke, and those that came subsequently, sounded like bombs going off somewhere deep underneath the pulpit. Call it sacrilege, but this little hellion was one heck of an instrument. Sure, the church's heavy wood interior contributed to the exceptional sound, but there was no denying the drum's crisp, superior response and cut-through power. At gigs and in practice sessions alike, it was as sensitive or loud as I needed it to be.

The drum's clear sidestick action also won me over, as did the ringing overtones. Consistency was key: Every stroke placed at different points on the head produced the same balanced, biting tone.

The lugs on the SE drum are staggered, with one lug attached to the shell toward the top, the next attached toward the bottom, and so on all the way around. This system—developed by designer/educator Bob Gatzen—creates a zigzag pattern with the lugs and the receiving tubes. According to N&C, the low-mass, nodally mounted black chrome tube lugs equally distribute the head tension over the shell, thus making the drum more responsive.

N&C also maintains that the design of their cam-action snares allows the wires to exert pressure evenly on the snare head for their full length. The wires themselves are separated into two groups of six wires and one of eight. This separation spreads the wires out a little and supposedly prevents them from choking the snare head in any way. I believe that the full-bodied attack and multidirectional projection of the SE drum was enhanced by this snare-wire design.

When A Snare Drum Is Not A Snare Drum

Unlike some high-end snare drums that have their throw-off attached to the bottom hoop, the N&C throw-off was screwed on to the shell. I detected no sound anomalies as a result of this design.

The throw-off lever drops down nearly 90°, and it must be all the way down in order to fully release the snare wires and achieve a "tom" sound. This wouldn't be much of an issue, were it not for the fact that the throw-off was stiff to operate. This may be a case of N&C being a victim of its own quality. Because the throw-off levers are made of machined brass rather than stamped metal, a simple flick of the fingers won't snap the snares down.

I checked with N&C about this situation, and was told that the mechanism is always stiff when it comes from the factory. Supposedly, it will become smoother with repeated use, to the point where the throw-off will easily flip up and down. So for the time being, there wasn't much I could do besides make sure that the throw-off was all the way down when I wanted to play with the snares off.

With the snares off, the SE drum had depth and presence that might be at home in a symphony orchestra. Some players might like this kind of timpanic motif; I've always preferred a duller, lighter attack. I was able to achieve such an attack by detuning the head. But, alas, doing that posed the problem of how to regain snare clarity when I needed it. On the plus side, this snare's alter ego would be perfect for the jungle landscapes of the drum 'n' bass or even Latin genres, where the kind of "pop" it creates would be right at home.

This all may seem like a minor issue to drummers for whom the "tom sound" of a snare drum is merely an afterthought, while the snare sound is critical. My advice? Tune the snare appropriately and worry about the tom later.

Alloy Classic

In 1989, N&C joined forces with Zildjian to develop the Zildjian Alloy snare. That drum featured a shell made from the cymbal company's secret alloy concoction, and has since become a must-have on the vintage market. Because of the response the Zildjian model received, N&C developed the new Alloy Classic. The new drum benefits from lessons learned fifteen years ago, when the company tried rolling and welding shells but discovered that casting produced the best-sounding results.

The Alloy Classic shell is cast from an aluminum alloy that's high in silica and offers a stiffness not found in sheet material. N&C's aim in producing this shell was to gain a brighter and cleaner sound than that produced by other alloy snares. I'm convinced that the substance of the shell, along with the lathing and machining processes that are applied to it, caused the sound to be projected in layers. This "sonic cake" boasted hearty, sweet, and soft tones. According to N&C, the lathing and machining processes applied to the shell make it more porous, producing a denser sound quality.

Visually, the Alloy Classic is unique. The drum's black powder-coat finish gives it a ninja-like character: sleek...with a focused, killer attitude, as if possessing the ability to cut through any material (in this case, musical material) at any time.

Alloy Classic Snare

As I did for the SE maple, I took the 5¾x13 Alloy Classic we were sent for review to a gig—this time an in-store. With every ringing stroke and bangin' rimshot suffered by the Remo coated Ambassador head, patrons jumped out of their chairs.

The SE and Alloy Classic drums were alike in some ways, but the alloy snare proved more of a workhorse. In practice sessions, I tuned up the drum to get a good sense of its range. From on high, the snare could approximate the loud, tight chatter of a marching-band snare. Tuned low, it could sink to the depths of a 14" wood-shell snare, with a warmer and softer attack than I had expected.

Conclusion

Let's face it, a gigging drummer could get a workable kit and a few used pieces of hardware for the price of one of these snare drums. Given that fact, one would expect every aspect to be perfect, right out of the box. I'd have to say that our review models were just *shy* of perfect, given the stiff throw-offs. But there's no denying that their overall sound quality—as well as such tiny details as a serial number handwritten above the N&C insignia stamped on the inner shell—represent the quality and craftsmanship that drummers have come to expect from Noble & Cooley.

The SE and Alloy Classic drums offer the potential to serve in diverse musical applications. And if you're working exclusively within one genre, you'll find them to be solid, consistent tools. Pricey? Yes. But then again, this may be a once-in-a-lifetime investment.

THE NUMBERS

5¾x13 SE (Special Edition) Maple	$825
5¾x13 Alloy Classic	$825

Note: The Alloy Classic is available in Black, Midnight Blue, Gold Vein, and Silver Vein finishes, and is also available in 4¾x14 and 6x14 sizes.

(413) 562-9694, www.noblecooley.com.

"MY DW DRUMS POSSESS STRENGTH AND ELEGANT SOPHISTICATION"

- SHEILA E.

©2005 Drum Workshop, Inc.

Alex Sofca

BAAAAAAAAACK!

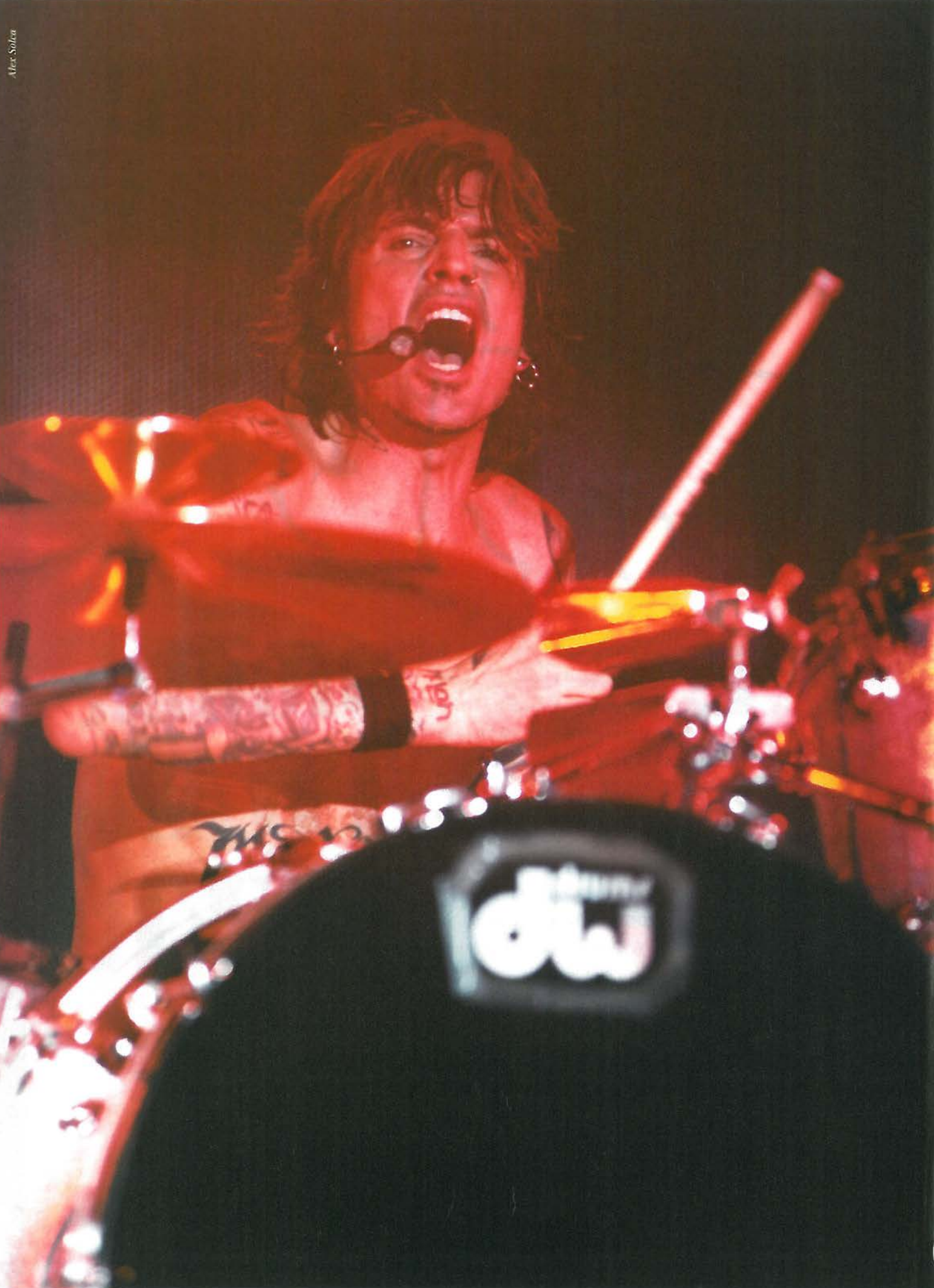
TOMMY LEE

BIGGER THAN EVER

Tommy Lee rushes into the rehearsal hall where Mötley Crüe is preparing for their year-long reunion tour, which supports their new best-of album, *Red, White & Crüe*. (The disc contains new tracks recently recorded by the band.) Lee's just come directly from NBC, where he's editing a six-episode TV series that takes him to college, a show he describes as semi-scripted and semi-reality. Now he's on the phone with none other than Steven Tyler, discussing the Aerosmith lead singer's possible contribution to Lee's solo record that is in the works. And Lee's just finished a book tour promoting his *New York Times* bestseller *Tommyland*. Whoa!

Understandably, Tommy is *exhausted*. But the Crüe drummer, at forty-two, whose previous life has included jail time and anger management sessions, is looking better than ever.

by Robyn Flans



Alex Solca

Mötley Crüe, with a history of multi-platinum albums and six Grammy wins, hasn't always found the road to be easy. Their success was often peppered with such self-destructive behavior as drunkenness (in 1985 lead singer Vince Neil was convicted of drunk driving and vehicular manslaughter when his car crashed and killed two passengers), drugs (1987's tour was disturbed by Nikki Sixx's near fatal drug overdose), incidents of lewd behavior, and lawsuits, as well as Lee's own very public domestic messes and scandals. It was an odd mix of huge musical success combined with personal difficulties. But through it all, few criticized Lee's drumming. In fact, like Ringo Starr in the '60s and Peter Criss in the '70s, Lee was a player who inspired a lot of young people to take up the drums.

It seems that now, finally, Tommy Lee is realizing his contribution to music and feeling positive about life. In fact, his mantra is, "What else could go right?" So with all these projects going on, Tommy recently sat down with *MD*—in the middle of completing his NBC show, rehearsing with the Crüe, and recording tracks for his new solo album.

"I'll sleep when I die," he says, smiling.

MD: Was your parting with Mötley Crüe on good or bad terms?

Tommy: When I left five years ago, Vince and I were on very bad terms. We had an altercation in an airport. I was on probation and he wanted to fight me, and I thought, If I get into a fight, I'm going back to jail for one year minimum—and I am *definitely* not going back. I had just gotten out. So I jumped on a plane and decided that I couldn't be in the band anymore, even though we were finishing up a tour at that time. Well, everybody called and said, "Dude, you've gotta come back, at least to finish the tour. There are only four more shows!" So I bit the bullet, did the four shows, and then bailed.

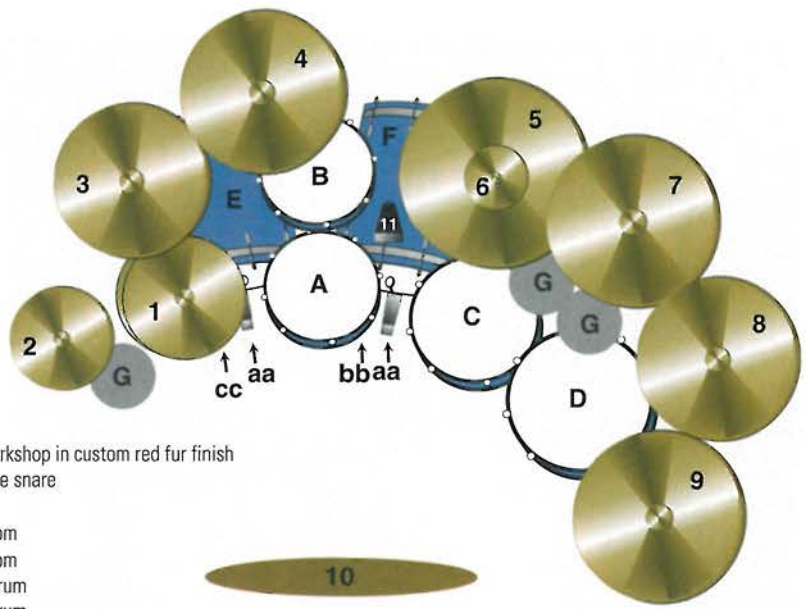
Now Vince and I are cordial to each other. We know what we have together, we know what we've created, and we know what we've accomplished. And we know that if we can stick together and are compassionate to each other, we can make it work. We just can't have any dramas. So here we go...we're gonna give it a shot.

MD: At this point you're just beginning to play together again. But what was it like with the other guys?

Tommy: It's been totally cool. Mick's health is getting better day by day. [The guitarist has a spinal disease and had a recent hip replacement operation.] I'm hoping that by the time the tour dates are announced, he'll be ready. I don't know if he'll ever be 100%. We're all hoping for 80%. But he's playing fine and each day he moves a little friskier. I've got my fingers crossed. I just want him to be well.

MD: What have you had to do to prepare

MÖTLEY CRÜE '05 TOUR KIT



Drums: Drum Workshop in custom red fur finish
A. 6½x14 bronze snare
B. 10x14 tom
C. 14x16 floor tom
D. 16x18 floor tom
E. 16x32 bass drum
F. 16x26 bass drum
G. Hart Dynamics pads

Cymbals: Zildjian
1. 15" A Rock hi-hats
2. 11" Oriental Trash splash
3. 18" Z Custom medium crash
4. 19" Z Custom Projection crash
5. 22" K Heavy ride
6. Zil-Bel (large) inverted on ride
7. 20" A Custom Projection crash
8. 19" Z Custom Thrash ride (used as crash)
9. 20" Oriental China Trash
10. 40" gong
11. cowbell

Hardware: DW including their 9000 series pedals (with Vater red wood beaters), Gibraltar rack system components, custom rack system by Steve Morrison and Rick Grossman
aa. DW 9000 double pedal
bb. DW 9000 remote bass drum pedal (for 32" kick)
cc. DW 9000 hi-hat stand

Electronics: ddrum3 module and triggers (all drums triggered and miked: 60% acoustic sound, 40% triggered), Hart Dynamics two-zone mesh pads, Power Mac G5 (running Motu Audio Desk and Propellerhead Reason software), Motu 828mkII audio interface, May Internal Miking System, Shure Microphones

Heads: Remo coated Emperor X on snare drum batter with Ambassador underneath (Ahead "Tone Cookie" for muffling), coated Emperors on tops of toms with smooth white Ambassadors underneath (Ahead "Tone Cookie" for muffling), smooth white Ambassadors on bass drum batters with black Ambassador on fronts (DW pillow for muffling)

Sticks: Ahead Tommy Lee Studio Signature model (slightly larger than 5B with acorn tip), Grip Tape

for getting in shape to tour?

Tommy: I'm trying to update some of the older songs to give them some fresh beats. That's important. Without wrecking it or taking away the original essence of what people liked, I'm just trying to give the tunes a little update.

MD: What does that entail from the way you played twenty years ago?

Tommy: Just stylistically, our music sounded a certain way, which was cool. But I want to modernize my parts a little bit. That might mean adding a few extra notes, or deleting some. I want my drum parts to be even funkier than they were, and at times maybe even a littler *heavier*.

MD: In your book, you described your music as pop with a rock edge. I hadn't really thought about it as being pop until I read that.

Tommy: When it's melodic, I consider it pop. Stuff that doesn't have melody is the super hard rock. When I think of a band like Sevendust, they're heavy as hell, but they have melodies, which to me doesn't make them a heavy metal band. No disrespect intended, but when I think of Slayer, there's really not a lot of melody going on. It's pretty agro. To me, *that's* heavy metal.

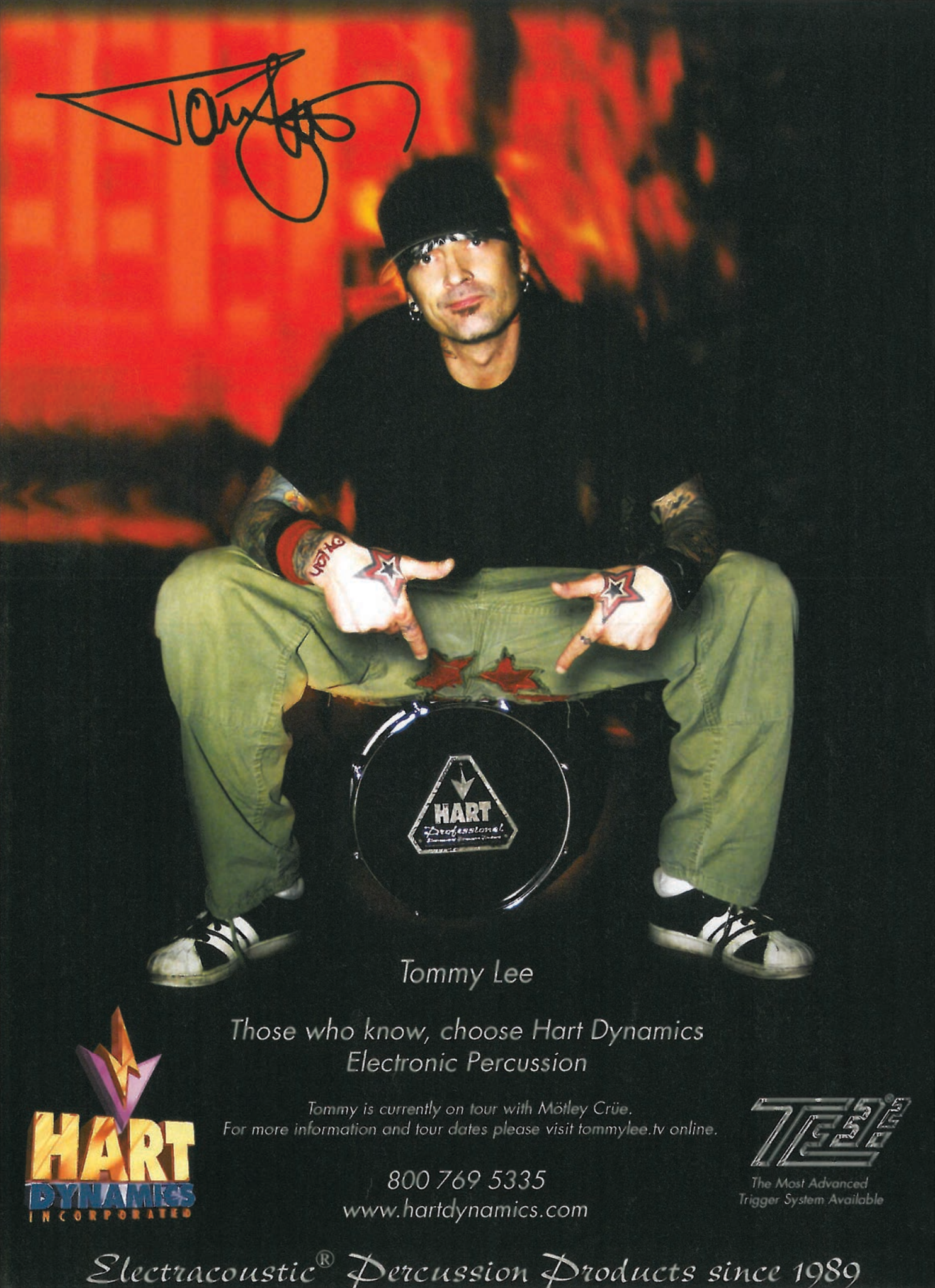
One of my all-time favorite bands is Cheap Trick—amazing melodies, great beats, and a super rock feel. I think our direction is more along those lines. So going back to our material today, I'm just trying to update it so when Mötley gets heavy, it gets *real* heavy. And when in the past it might have been a bit straight, I'll be trying to make it just a little bit funkier. Music has changed quite a bit since those records were made.

MD: There have been certain icons who have inspired the kids through the decades, like Ringo in the '60s and Peter Criss in the '70s. You were the guy in the '80s. What was it about you that the kids seemed to be attracted to?

Tommy: Well, I would always be bummed out when I'd go to a concert and, when it was time for the drum solo, the audience would go out to buy beer or a T-shirt, thinking, Ah, it's the drum solo. It didn't seem like very many drummers took the time to make it a *show*.

So maybe for me, it's a two-part thing people liked: They dug the musical side—the parts and the power. But they also dug the showy stuff—the twirling of the sticks, the hitting of the drum and making the sticks bounce off and then catching them while still playing with one hand, or my whole kit twirling around upside down in a cage or flying out over the audience. I'm always trying to give the audience a reason

continued on page 48



Tommy Lee

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SIXX ON TOMMY

A few thoughts from Mötley Crüe bassist Nikki Sixx on Tommy Lee's return to the band.

MD: If Mötley Crüe were auditioning drummers, how would you write the newspaper ad for what the band needs?

Nikki: Feel, creativity, high energy, and an *insane* personality.

MD: You've been playing with Tommy forever.

Nikki: Yup, forever. When we started the group I was twenty-two and Tommy was seventeen.

MD: When you think back to those early days, why do you think you and Tommy connected so well as players?

Nikki: I think a lot of bass players are too busy, and a lot of drummers are just pocket players. Tommy and I are just the opposite. Tommy is a pocket player, but he likes to do really interesting rhythmic things. The bass players who inspired me were guys like Overend Pete Watts [Mott The Hoople] and Pete Way [UFO]. I wanted to be a bass player who really lays in the pocket. I love the bass player from AC/DC. Basically, I don't care for a lot of notes, just notes that are very well placed.

When you have a drummer like Tommy, who does rhythmic things that can become very hooky, for a bass player like me, I can find certain elements to lock on that become infectious. Sometimes they're subtle, and sometimes they're not, like the beginning of "Dr. Feelgood," which I think is very addictive.

MD: What things do you love playing when you think about connecting with a drummer?

Nikki: I'm the kind of guy who likes to play in the pocket, but *off* the beat. I like to squirrel around a little bit. And I'm always hoping that the drummer pushes and pulls different things—put a fill in at the half measure instead of at the top, or play fills halfway through the next bar, so it's a little odd. I like all of those sorts of things, as long as it doesn't get in the way of the groove.

MD: Now when you think about Tommy, twenty-plus years later, how do you think he's grown as a player?

Nikki: I think the separation we had was really good for the bass and drums. [Lee left the band five years ago.] When we played together after the break, I really noticed my progression as a bass player and his progression as a drummer. We both have solidified our playing.

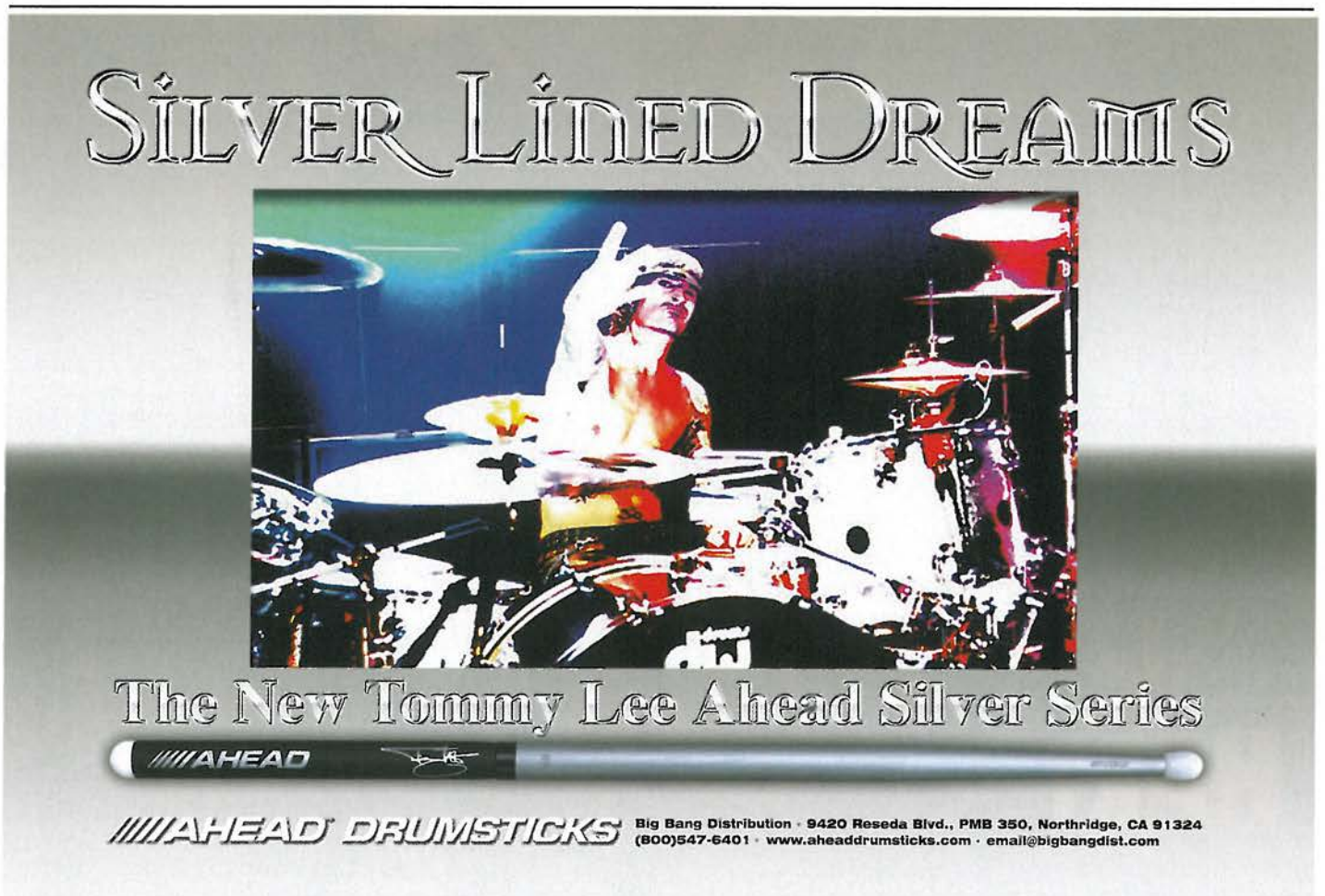
As for me, I really care about things now that maybe weren't so important to me back then. I used to drive through the beat. But now I'm going with the bass drum a little bit more and trying to flow—a little less heavy metal and a little more musical. Tommy's ability to play different styles has always been there, but I think his growth as a drummer came from having outside interests. If you look at "Shout At The Devil," which is a trademark heavy metal anthem, you don't realize that the rhythm behind that is so important. It's got such an amazing groove to it.

In the early days, Tommy's love for John Bonham really came through in his playing. Bonham had one of the greatest feels in the world, and I think Tommy has that too. His energy, mixed with that feel, is a big part of the sound of Mötley Crüe.

MD: How do you feel being back together?

Nikki: I'm having a great time. I'm the kind of person who wakes up every day and goes, I can't believe I'm not dead! I can't believe I get to make music for a living! And anything after that is icing on the cake. I've got the most killer family who supports me, and great friends, so I wake up and go, Wow, I feel so lucky to be able to do this, whether it's a train wreck or not.

Robyn Flans



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19" Z Custom Thrash Ride
20" Oriental China Trash
40" Gong

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to never leave their seats. I always wanted it to be, "Tommy's gonna do a drum solo. What's it gonna be this year?" I always try to involve the audience too, so they feel a part of it, whether they're all stomping their feet, clapping, or just tripping out.

MD: So what's it going to be this year? In your book you mentioned wanting to have some sort of roller coaster setup, where you could solo while going on a ride.

Tommy: That's exactly what we're working on. I don't think we can do it so I travel out and over the audience, because that becomes an insurance nightmare. But we're trying to design it so it takes place on the stage, where it's something we can control. We're in the early stages of it right now.

MD: We can be sure it will be amazing, though.

Tommy: For sure. Every time Mötley goes out, we always spend way too much money on the production. But we do that for the fans. We make less money, but whatever. If the fans go away losing their minds, then it's money well spent. Since day one with this band, it has always been about the show. I'm sure it will be the same this time as well.

MD: I was asking you about being an inspiration, but who were *your* drum inspirations growing up?

Tommy: John Bonham is sitting at number-one for me. I'm so bummed that I never got to see that guy play in person. I've watched DVDs and anything I could find. He was definitely my biggest inspiration. After him there's a list of great drummers I've been inspired by. My favorite drummers are the guys who accentuate the music and don't overplay. There are guys who *are* the music and then there are guys who are just in the band. Just like Bonham would play stuff where you would go, Of course, what a gigantic, monstrous groove—exactly what the song needs. Some of the best drummers in the world, to me, are the ones who think that way, not How cool can I look while I'm playing this crazy part? It's about what the song needs, and Bonham always did that.

MD: You're awfully busy right now.

Tommy: Mötley's my day job—and then right after rehearsal, I go to the recording studio where I'm making another solo record. I just finished filming this show for NBC where we set up scenarios and then from there, whatever happened, happened, which makes it really funny.

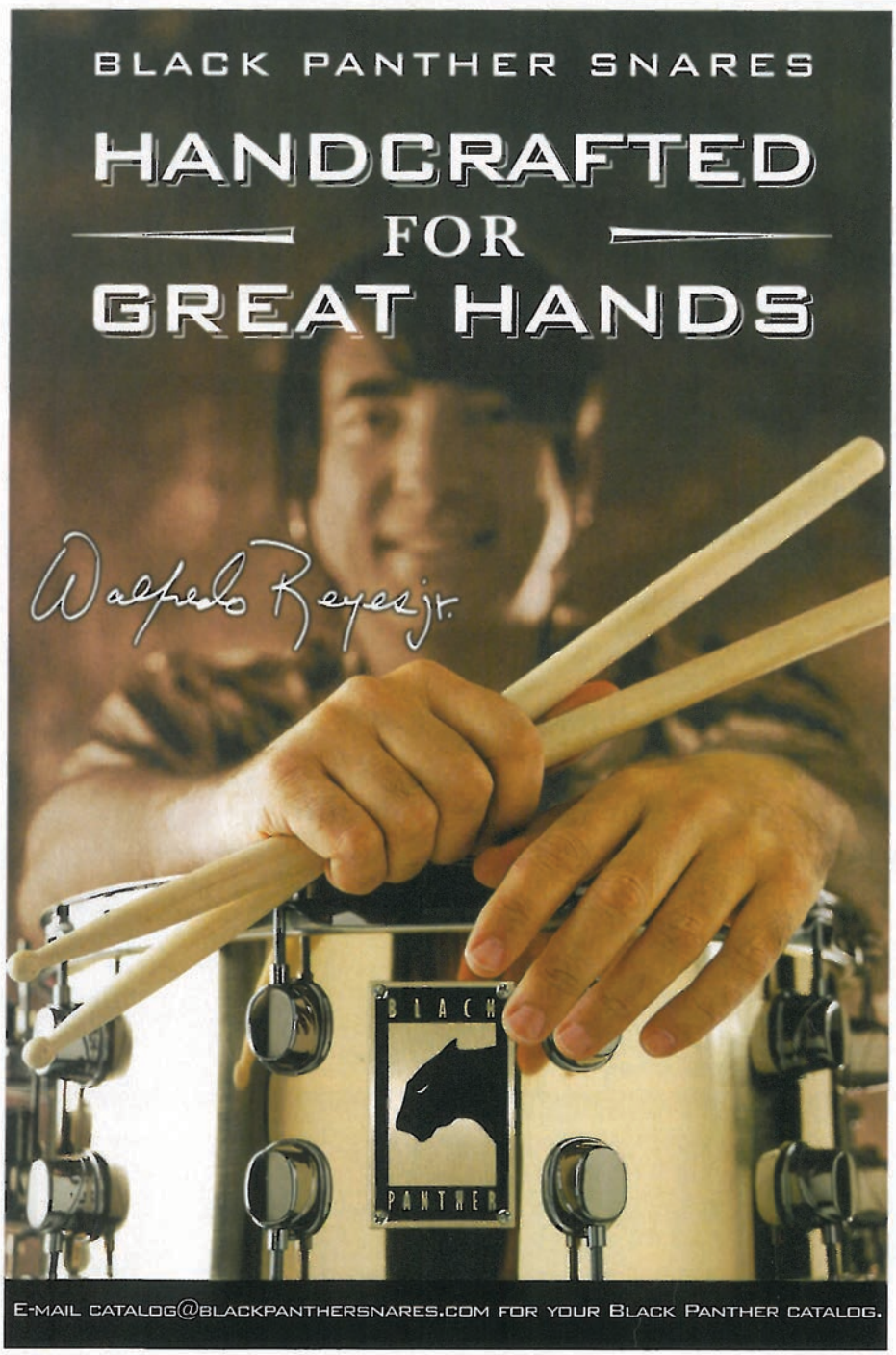
MD: I hear you played in a drum corps with a college band on the show.

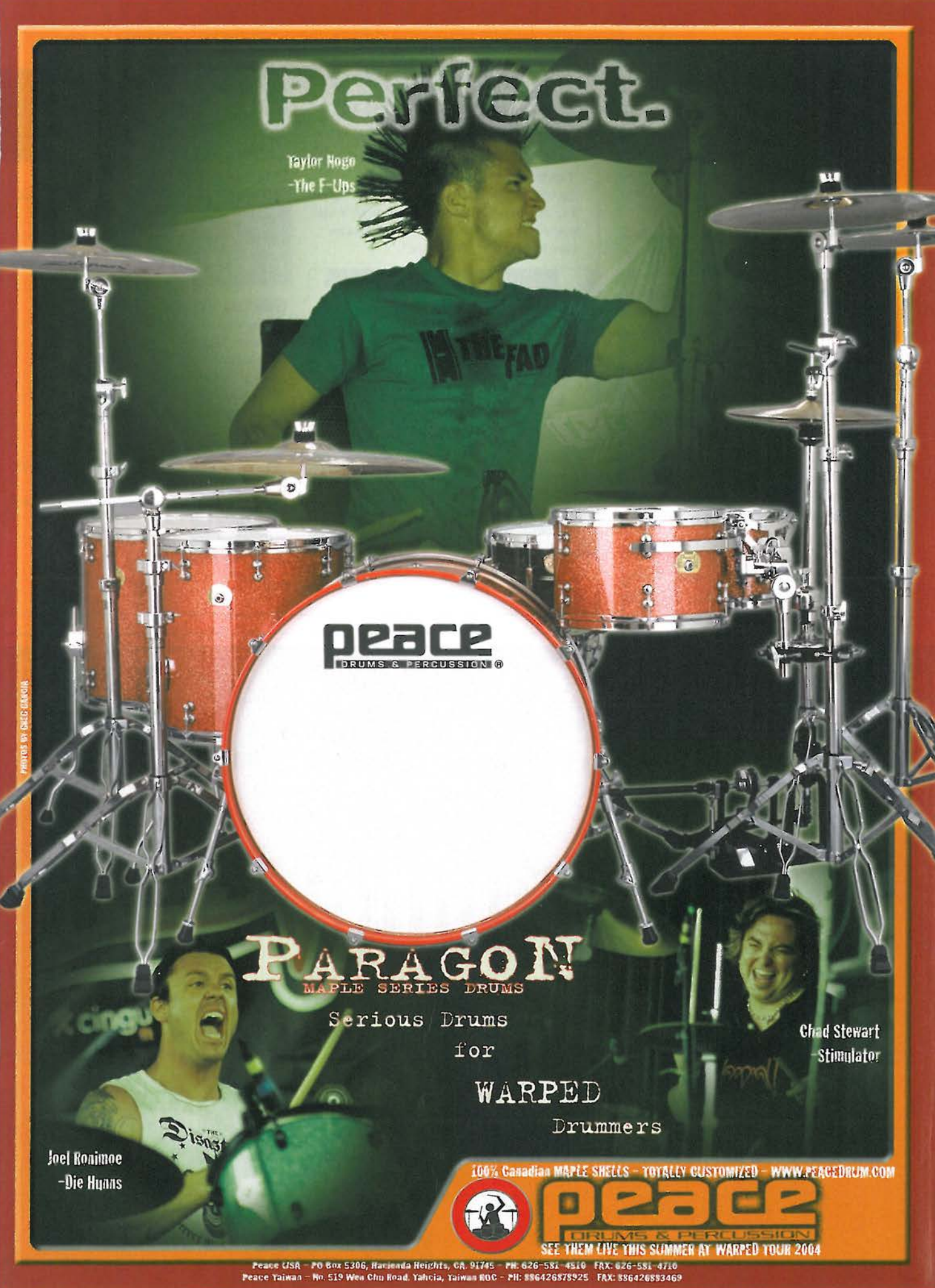
Tommy: I actually did play with marching bands all through junior high and high school—I was in the drum line and loved it. But for the TV show, which has me going to college at Nebraska, I thought I'd take some music classes because I figured I would ace them.

It was pretty funny, because there I was in college, and on the first day I had to make it to a 6:00 A.M. rehearsal for the marching band. It was dark outside, in this big 80,000-seat stadium in Nebraska, and I'm thinking, No problem. All the drummers were excited, going, "This is amazing. Tommy Lee is here!" And all of a sudden the drum captain comes up and lays down a thick stack of sheet music in front of me. I was like, Uh oh. When we make records, we don't read music. We play by heart, feel, and passion.

MD: But you read in high school, right?

Tommy: Yes, but that was a while ago. So

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I thought, Man, I've got to get myself reacquainted with reading music again—the note values, the time signatures, the accents, the beats, the rests. Maybe this part of college that I thought I'd ace isn't going to be so easy! But I wanted to do it. So I thought, I'm definitely going back to school. I've got to re-learn this.

There was a two-week trial period, where I worked real hard to get my act together. On the last day, the day before the big football game on Saturday—with the big halftime performance—they came up to me and said, "Congratulations, you're in. Be here at 7:00 A.M. tomorrow." We did the whole performance and it was awesome.

Playing a halftime show on that scale was a lot different from a high school football game where there are a few hundred people in the stands. The people in Nebraska take football very seriously. That whole town is about football. It was an 87,000-seat stadium that was packed, and it was so cool.

MD: Do you practice?

Tommy: I still play every day. I play drums here or up at my studio, recording my solo record where I play drums, guitar,

A Mötley Brew
A Selected Tommy Lee Discography

Too Fast For Love
The Crüe's 1983 debut album. Harder and tougher than those only familiar with the band's MTV hits would imagine. Enhanced reissue contains the video for the classic "Live Wire."

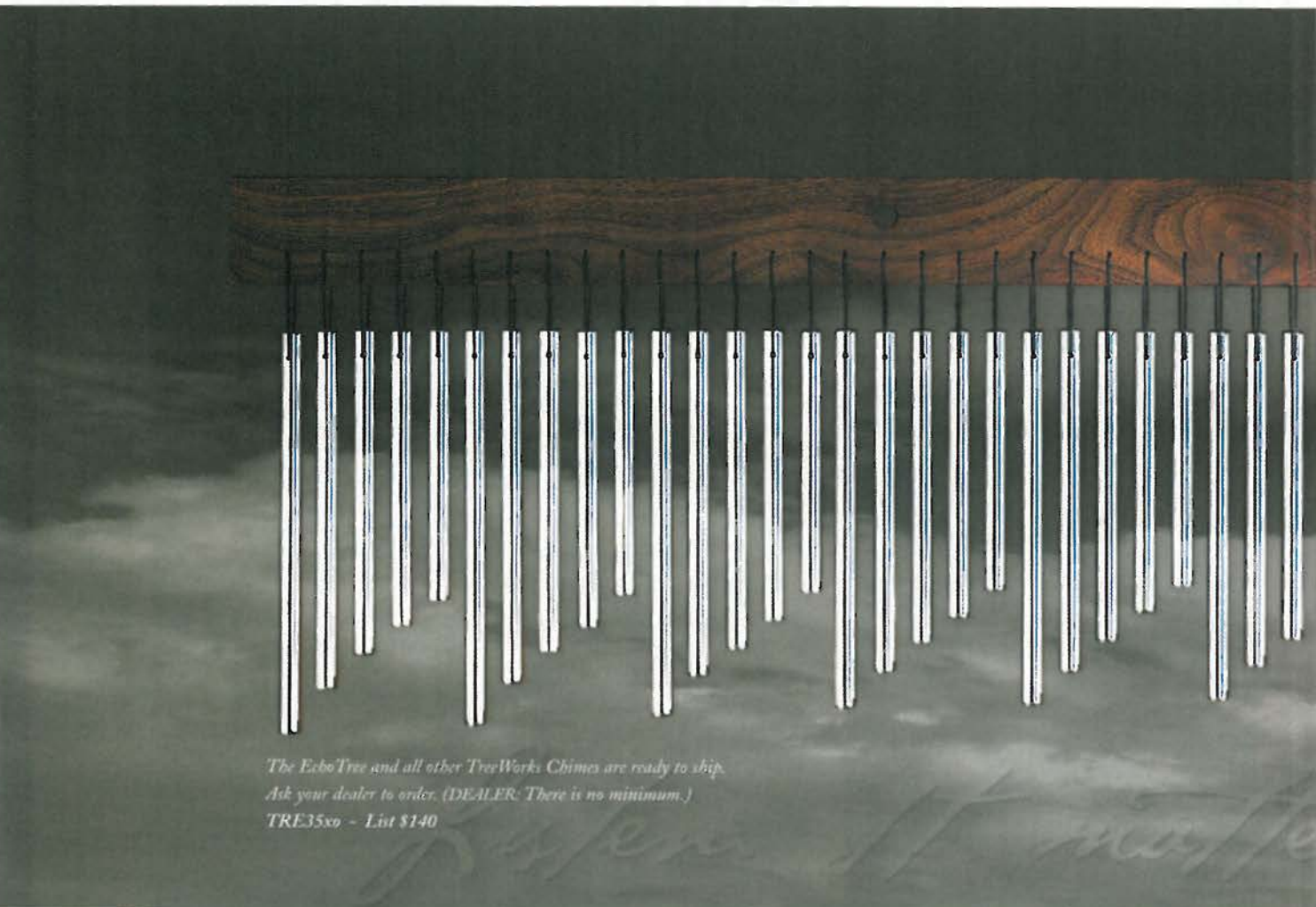
Shout At The Devil

Featuring the hit title track, as well as a cover of The Beatles' "Helter Skelter."

Girls, Girls, Girls
Tommy would put album-opener "Wild Side" on his résumé for God. The next song, another hit title track, is a classic of the genre as well.

Dr. Feelgood

It's 1989, and the Crüe record yet *another* title-track hit. This time the album hits number-1, and The Crüe are at the top of their game.

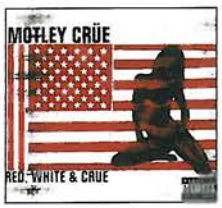


Methods Of Mayhem

According to Tommy, "anything and everything" went into his first major recording project following the breakup of The Crüe. This 1999 release features Kid Rock, Lil' Kim, and George Clinton, among others.

Never A Dull Moment

Tommy's proper 2002 solo debut, more "rock" and less "star" than the Methods Of Mayhem release.



Red, White & Crüe

The latest best-of, including a couple of brand-new songs.

and bass, sing, and program—I do it all. There are drums at my house, drums in my studio, drums at the other studio I work at, and drums here at the rehearsal hall. There are drums all over, wherever I'm at.

MD: One of the techniques people admired about your playing was your double bass technique. Are you still using double bass, or are you using a double pedal on one drum?

Tommy: I'm rehearsing with a double pedal, but that's only because there isn't another bass drum here. Yes, I will have double bass live. I love it.

MD: What inspired you to play it?

Tommy: It was my very first concert—Van Halen. It was the tour in support of their first record. I snuck out of my second-story bedroom window while my parents were sleeping, jumped off the roof onto a tree, and then into my buddy's car, to see Van Halen. I remember being at the show and standing on my chair all night watching Alex Van Halen play double bass. I also saw The Pat Travers Band with Tommy Aldridge, another drummer I always liked, playing great double bass. And at that time it was also *KISS Alive,* with the huge double bass, with the fires and the bombs. I remember thinking, "*This* is what I'm talkin' about!"

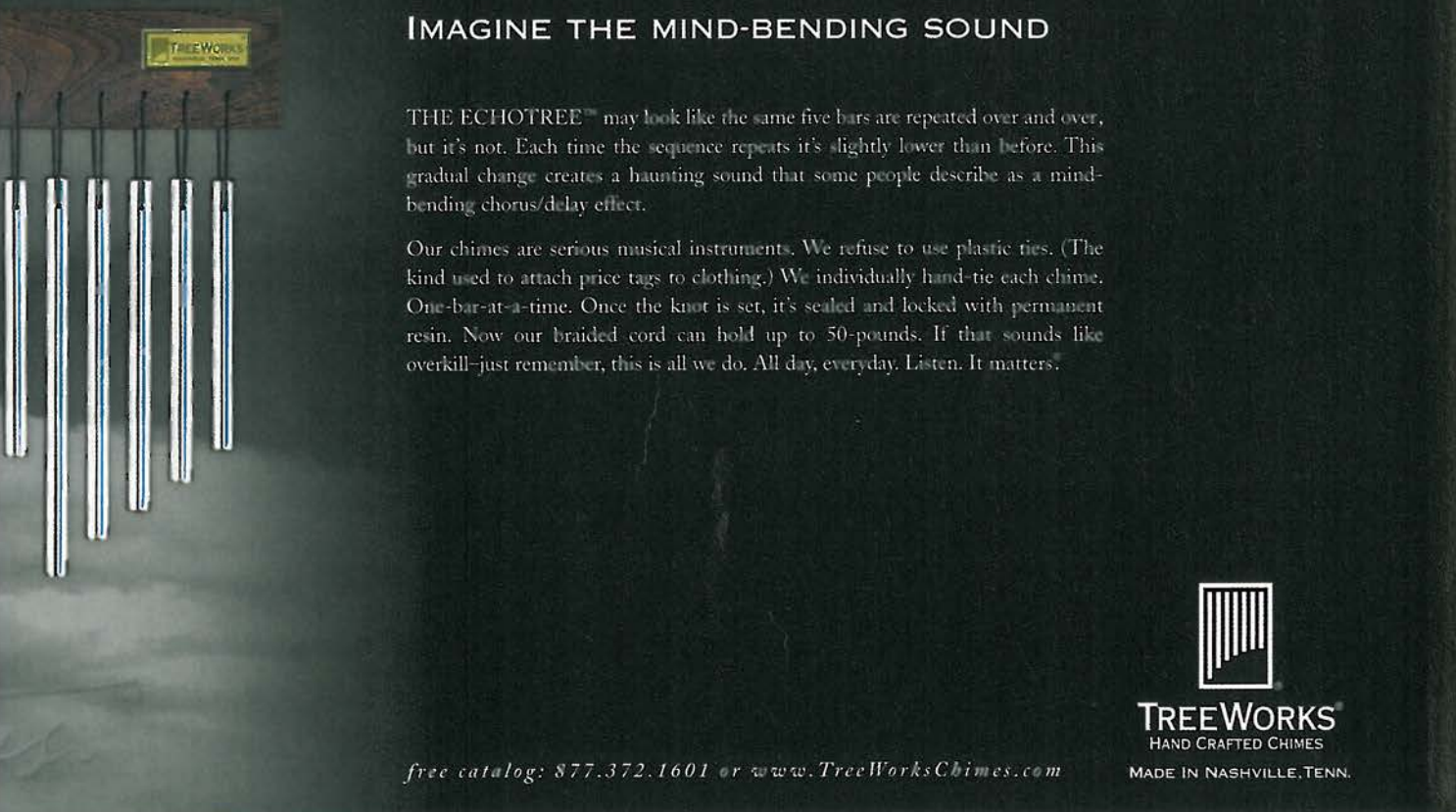
MD: How did you learn double bass?

Tommy: I mowed enough lawns, painted enough houses, and worked ridiculous amounts of time for a summer or two to make enough money to buy my first double bass set. I had a set before that—a little single bass, almost cocktail kind of kit.

When I sat down at that double bass kit the first time, I was in heaven. I would sit there and practice for hours sometimes, doing 16th notes back and forth, just trying to make them precise. Then I would start doubling things up. I was thinking, "God, if you've got two bass drums, why wouldn't you play them both at the same time?" So I would play beats where I would play them both at the same time. That was a different way to apply them.

MD: Besides what you play, people talk about *how* you play—your showy playing style. Where did some of that stuff come from?

Tommy: One day, by accident, I was playing and a stick slipped out of my hand, shot up into the air, came down, and I caught it.



I thought, "Hey, wait a minute. That looked cool." It was a total accident. So then I took my snare drum and a stool and sat out in my parents' backyard with a big bundle of sticks. I started trying one after another—tossing the stick at the snare drum with the drum positioned at various angles. "Whoops, that one went over into the neighbor's yard...that one flew back and almost hit me in the eye...oh, there goes another one into the neighbor's yard."

Eventually I realized that if I placed the snare drum level and let the stick go straight, it would go straight up. I was always trying to come up with my own things, little ideas that I hadn't seen any other drummer do. I wanted to take it further.

I had gone to many concerts and realized that the drummer is always the guy in the back. I thought that sucks. I never wanted to be in the back, which is probably why I made two solo albums and actually went out front too. That's also why, when we designed the shows for Mötley, it was always, How do we move the drums from the generic place everybody puts them into a more prominent spot? How can we get the drummer to be a part of the show, or bring him up front, or over the audience's heads, or spinning upside down, or make the drums levitate and disappear? How do we make this cool?

MD: Which one of your insane drumkit extravaganzas was your favorite or the most scary?

Tommy: The one that was a little scary was the cage that rolled, because that was a technical nightmare. Drums obviously weren't made to be played upside down, so we had to redesign all sorts of things. When you're upside down, the bass drum pedals fall, so we needed springs to hold them up so they would stay in place. Cymbals did weird things upside down too. Everything is made to be on a stand, they weren't meant to hang upside down. Then there were hydraulic problems, and we had to think about microphones, cables, lighting—it was a technical nightmare.

I'll never forget sitting there with our production manager and techs right before the first time we did it. We still had some bugs to work out. "Guys, we have ten minutes before the doors open, and I've never been on this thing." But somehow we pulled it off. That one was the scariest.

I can't say one was any more fun than another, because they were all fun—that was the whole point. I really enjoyed the next thing I did, where the drums floated out and over the audience. I was really happy to be able to "travel" to the lousiest seat in the back of the arena so the fans could see me. It was so great to see their faces and their expressions. I remember seeing people's eyeballs popping out of their heads!

Then after that it was, "Okay, I brought my drums to the people in the very back and I've spun upside down. Now what? What else is there left to do? Hmmm, let's make the drums disappear." So I met with magician David Copperfield's people, and that was a lot of fun because there was some trickery and some crazy timing involving video. I was playing the drums on stage, and then I shot down under the stage and quickly put on a different outfit while a video was projecting me playing in the spot I had just been in. It was crazy and so much fun because it was magic. I felt like David Copperfield for a minute.

MD: It's no secret that back in those days there was substance abuse going on in the band. Now you seem pretty level-headed,

Black Beauty Cowbell
October 1965

Vibra-Slap
June 1969

Multi-Güiro
March 1975

Afuche/Cabasa
January 1978

The Claw
April 1981

Plastic Rainmaker
March 1989

Jam Block
June 1989

Granite Blocks
July 1989

Ridge Rider Cowbell
November 1989

Cyclops Tambourine
December 1991

Tube Shekere
December 1993

Comfort Curve Rim
January 1994

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Strap Lock Bongo Stand
July 1995

Blast Block
December 1997

Pro Care Shell Protectors
January 1999

Sambago Bell
December 1999

Triple Conga Stand
January 2000

Killer Klave
February 2000

Claro Bell
January 2001

Chick-Itas
January 2001

Cyclops Shaker
July 2001

One Shot Shaker
January 2002

Bronze Timbales
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January 2002

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August 2002

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Tommy Lee

and you've gone though a bunch of junk…

Tommy: …I'm a dad now.

MD: That changes things, doesn't it?

Tommy: Oh, yes.

MD: What can you tell us about playing music straight vs. messed up?

Tommy: The thing is, with Mötley, I think a lot of people thought we were jacked up all the time. This may come as a surprise to readers, but we weren't really jacked up while we were on stage. We always took that really seriously. In the middle of the show, Nikki did this thing during his bass solo where he would drink about half a fifth of Jack Daniels and then he'd bring it back to me. I drank half of it and then I had to go spin upside down. But by that time, it was three quarters into the show and everybody was getting looser. But we would never sit around prior to a show and get blitzed, because the fans don't deserve that. Who wants to see a bunch of guys stumbling around? And trust me, we had tried that before. You're thinking you're kicking ass onstage, but you're just sucking.

MD: Tell us about your new solo album.

Tommy: It's incredible. My first solo effort was a project called Methods Of Mayhem, which was a collaboration that was great for me because it was the first time I *saw* me. I had just left Mötley and thought, This record is going to be "anything and everything goes." So we did hip-hop rock tracks with Lil' Kim, George Clinton, and Fred Durst from Limp Bizkit, a song with Kid Rock, and a song with The Crystal Method—I'm a big fan of electronic music. I do these DJ drum gigs strictly because I love dance music.

This record I'm doing now is different from that. I've been working with Slash from Velvet Revolver, and Ben [Moody] from Evanescence, Chris Cornell, Chad [Kroeger] from Nickelback, Nick [Carter] from The Backstreet Boys, and Pink. And I just got off the phone with Steven Tyler. The record is amazing. What I'm finding is that I really enjoy collaborating with other artists. I've reached out to Lenny Kravitz. I've called people and said, "Hey man, I've got some amazing songs that we can either collaborate on, or we can write something totally different together. Or if you don't want to write, come in and sing on it with me."

MD: What three songs that you've played

on would you put on an audition tape for God?

Tommy: I'm not sure I'd want to play God a song called "Shout At The Devil," but it's saying shout *at* the devil, not shout *with* the devil, so he might be down with that. But it would be "Shout At The Devil '97," because we did an updated version. That's what I mean when I'm talking about bringing things up to current speed to where music is today. It's a re-mix—same song, but updated.

I really admire an artist like David Bowie, who, to me, is a chameleon. No matter what year it is, he's with it. He still plays his classics, but when he plays them live he does different versions of them. Every time you see or hear that guy, he looks different and sounds different. I just saw him in Las Vegas. I was sitting in the front row, watching him and thinking, The dude still looks twenty-five years old. He's always current, which I believe helps an artist achieve longevity.

But back to the list, another song would be "Wild Side." There are lots of drums in there and the video was crazy. I was spinning around upside down. I would want God to see that: "Check this out. It'll blow your mind."

And there's a song on my new record called "Hello Again" that is the best song I've ever written, hands down. It's like Radiohead meets Coldplay meets The Beatles. I wrote it on piano, and Andrew [McMahon] from Something Corporate and I sing it together.

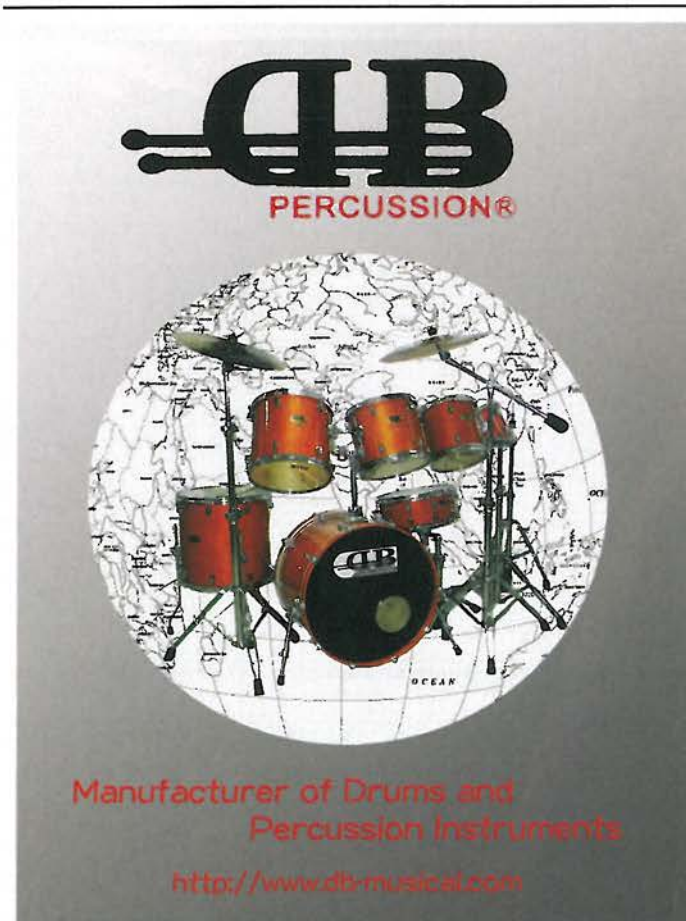
I guess the song means the most to me because it's about a very good friend of mine named Tim. He married his high school sweetheart after some medical complications, which they sorted out, and then they had a baby. But a few months later his wife was driving, pulled over to the side of the road, and just died. I thought, Oh my God. How can this be happening? I was so inspired that I sat down at the piano and wrote the song for Tim, with the premise being, What would a person say to somebody they haven't seen in a really long time or will never see again until one day in heaven? I tear up while listening to that song. Anyway, I would play that for God because he'd probably cry too.

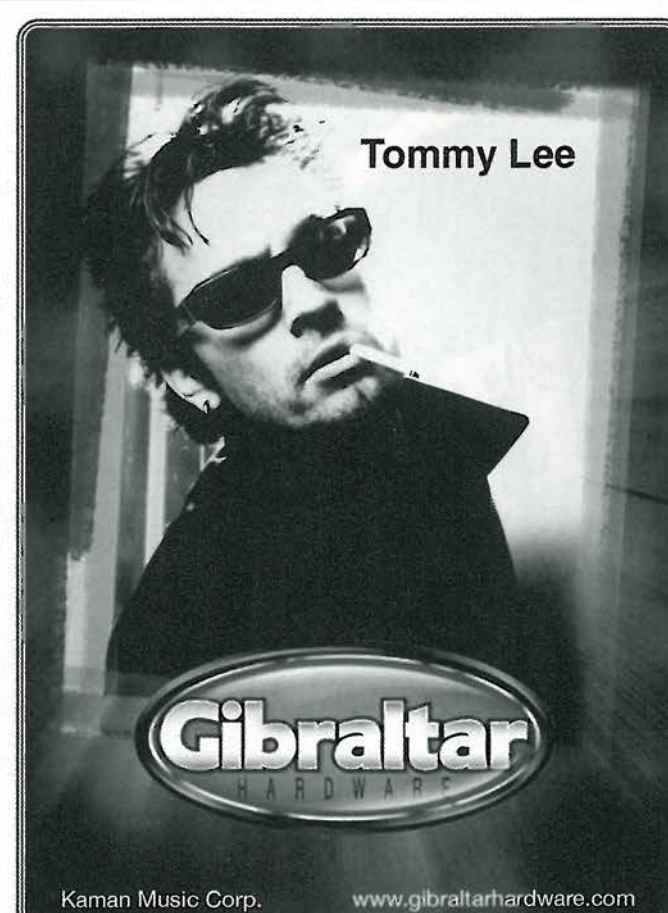
MD: Last question: Why are you a better drummer today than you were twenty years ago?

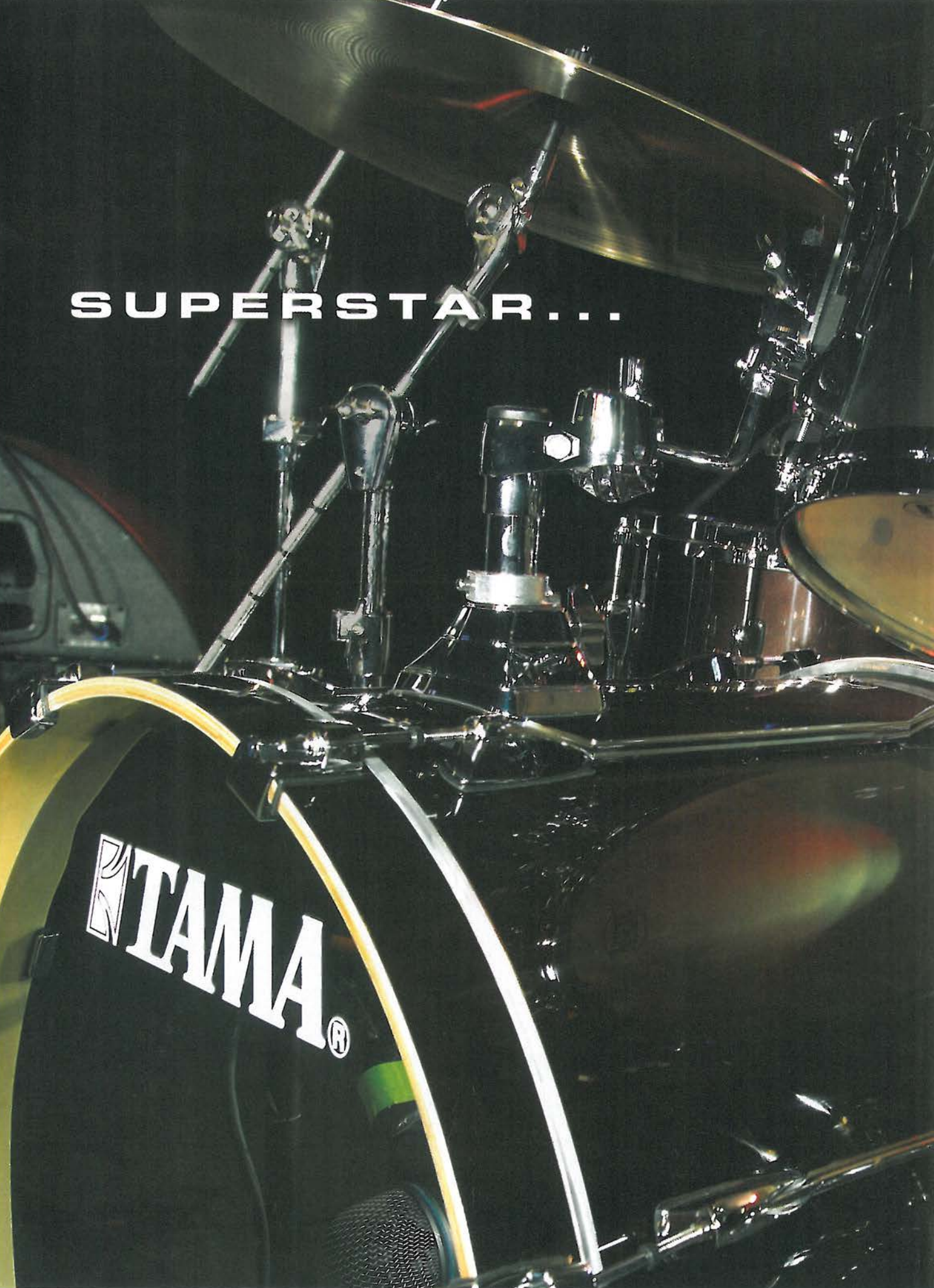
Tommy: I think I just have a better sense of the craft. Hopefully as you do this more, your craft gets better and better. I think I have a better sense of songwriting and a better sense of space. When is it a good time for a drum fill? When is it *not* a good time? When are you stepping on the vocal line? And is the chorus moving everybody in the place?

You learn things from experience. For instance, you realize that what works really well in the studio and sounds great on headphones or on the radio comes off as a snore onstage because the tempo is too slow. It's just experience. Now I know that when you get out of the studio, you bump the tracks up, probably two beats per minute, some as much as three or four, and it gives it that live, energetic feel.

I guess it just comes down to experience. I've been doing this for a long time and produced records and made a bunch of them. I think I just *get it* now. And that's made me a better drummer.



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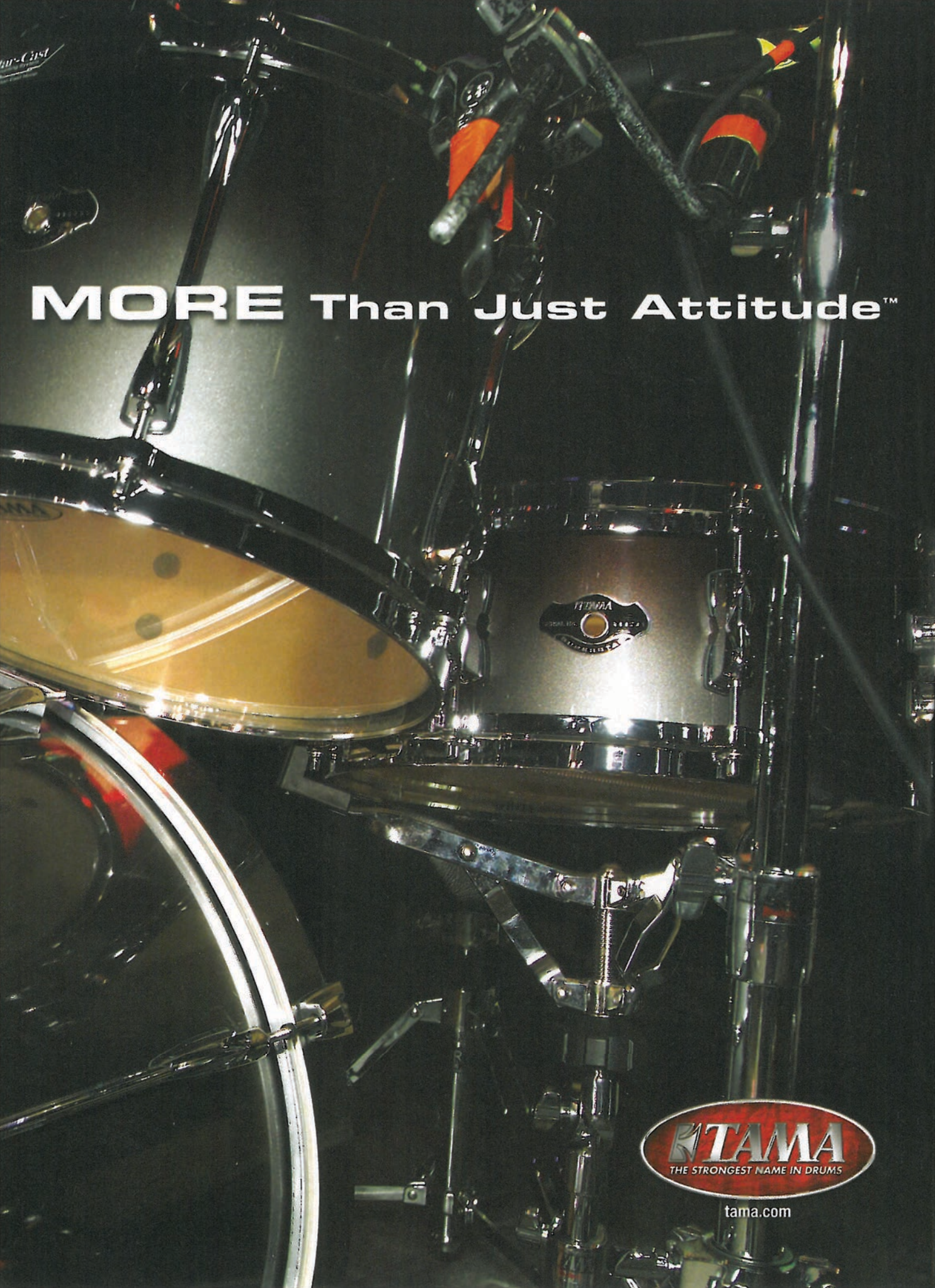
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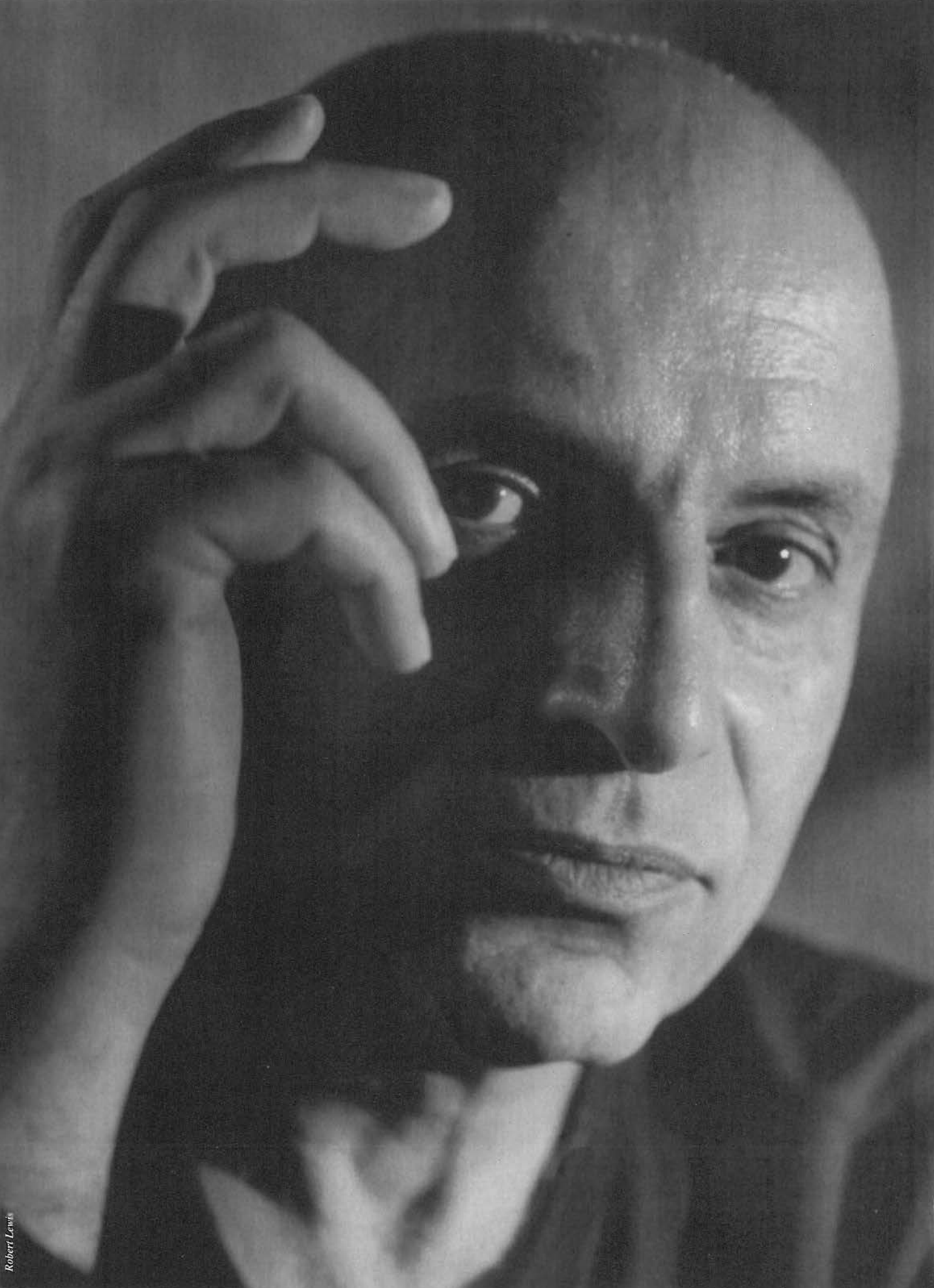


Robert Lewis

Paul Motian

Embracing The Past, Forging The Future

by Burt Korall

Paul Motian's place in jazz drumming history is secure. His classic performances in the 1960s with mainstream modern pianist Bill Evans, or with highly adventurous and advanced artists like bassist Gary Peacock, trombonist Roswell Rudd, and pianist Paul Bley, are impressive. They document the drummer's seemingly total lack of fear when it comes to taking chances.

Today, even at the age of seventy-four, Motian remains a key, major musical figure. The reason is clear. He's never allowed himself to stylistically stand still, either as a drummer or a composer. Strongly motivated, Motian has continued to grow by remaining open to all kinds of music. And by insisting on not closing off any path of possibility—and getting sharply positive musical results—Motian is an undeniably hip role model for today's developing drummer. He plays new and old things in a manner that is thoroughly convincing and true.

While most drummers his age have turned away from performing, claiming the need for rest or complete retirement, Motian remains deeply involved with the instrument. "Music is what makes life interesting and challenging," he says. "If I didn't play and compose, I don't know what I'd do." His latest release, *I Have The Room Above Her*, featuring Joe Lovano and Bill Frisell, is another excellent showcase of Motian's formidable talents. And this is just the first of a number of recordings he's recently made for ECM. Watch for two trio discs: one with Bobo Stenson and Anders Jormin, and another with Enrico Rava and Stefano Bollani. There's also a recording of Motian's Electric Bebop Band coming down the pike.

Motian's playing experience has been an uninterrupted, flowing, historical matter. And he believes playing and writing music is a matter of all you know. "All idioms are connected," Motian insists. "My work as a drummer and composer has been affected by all I've heard and thought about."

When asked about possible retirement sometime in the foreseeable future, Motian chuckles, as he has a habit of doing. Recalling Duke Ellington's answer to a similar inquiry, he asks, "To what?"

Motian's connection with music began early. His Armenian parents had originally immigrated to Philadelphia, where Paul was born. Then the family moved to Providence, Rhode Island, bringing their music with them.

"As a kid, Arabic- and Turkish-derived melodies and rhythms got me dancing around the parlor," Motian recalls. His most important link to music, however, was established between the ages of twelve and thirteen. "I hung out with a drummer in the neighborhood," he says, adding, "I listened to the guy practice and was completely taken with the instrument. I played the guitar briefly and quit. The drums had what I wanted and needed."

Motian initially became involved with swing and the big bands. He listened to Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, and Sidney Catlett. "Sid could create more music in four bars than anyone," Motian recalls. Jo Jones' approach with Count Basie, particularly his work on the hi-hat, left a lasting impression. A bit later, Motian became fascinated with Max Roach and Kenny Clarke, and he recognized the intense musicality of Dave Tough and Shadow Wilson.

Getting beyond the attraction to technical aspects of playing, Motian became increasingly involved with what drummers were *saying* when playing, how they went about projecting who and what they are. "Krupa was a show business icon; he played well and was quite visual," Motian points out. "I loved Kenny Clarke. His beat was irresistible. And Max's solos and the manner in which he played—how he related to the music—were certainly important to my generation."

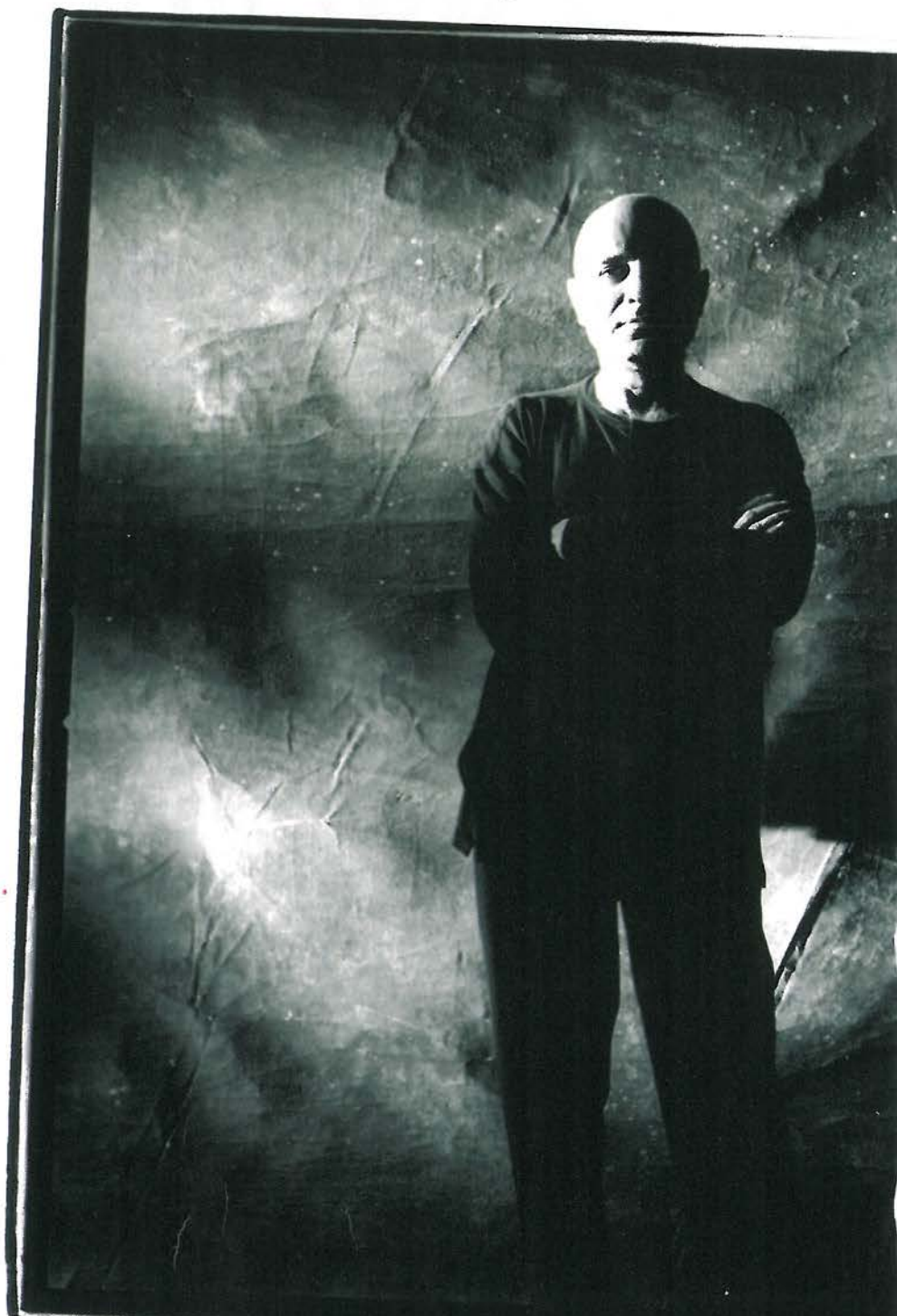
Out of great interest in music generally comes an intense need to learn as much about it as possible. Motian became a drum student and spent time in Rhode Island working with George Geer and Emilio "Yank" Ragusa, and in New York with Fred Albright, Eldon Bailey of the New York Philharmonic, and the widely admired Billy Gladstone, the famed Radio City Music Hall percussionist.

"I went through a variety of drum instruction books, developing my hands and reading ability," Paul recalls. "I did a lot of practicing and received the sort of training that is most applicable if you want to play with a symphony orchestra. I can't say this sort of studying wasn't helpful. It was. But my interests were elsewhere; they were in jazz.

"Lacking in my drum studies," he continues, "was information regarding song structure, harmony, and things of that sort. I didn't fill in those blanks until I started playing with all kinds of people."

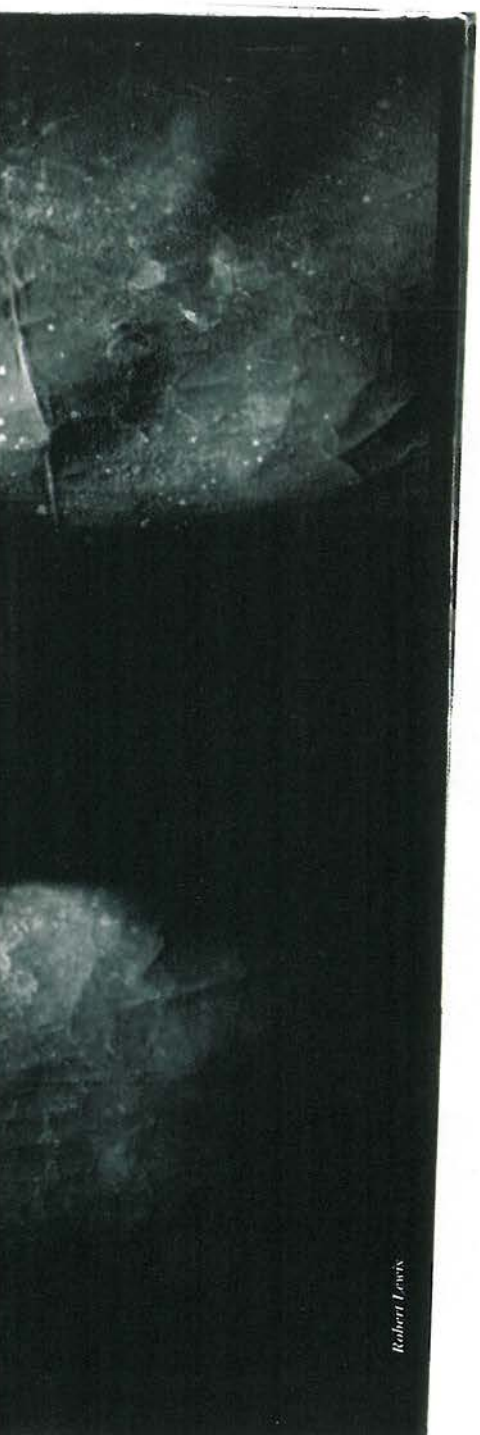
Motian recalls especially enjoying his studies with Billy Gladstone. "During the Korean War, when I was in a Navy band in Virginia, I'd come up to New York for lessons with Billy. He had unbelievable hands. They were almost perfectly controlled. He really knew the instrument. Many drummers came to the Music Hall specifically to see and hear him and went away thoroughly impressed. His roll was absolutely terrific. Billy liked jazz. He took me to hear Zutty Singleton, the great traditional jazz drummer, for the first time. I remember that!"

Motian's musical education included listening to countless recordings. It was part of the process of developing an acute awareness of what was going on in jazz. Going to hear music live was also crucial



to expanding his knowledge of how to deal with the instrument.

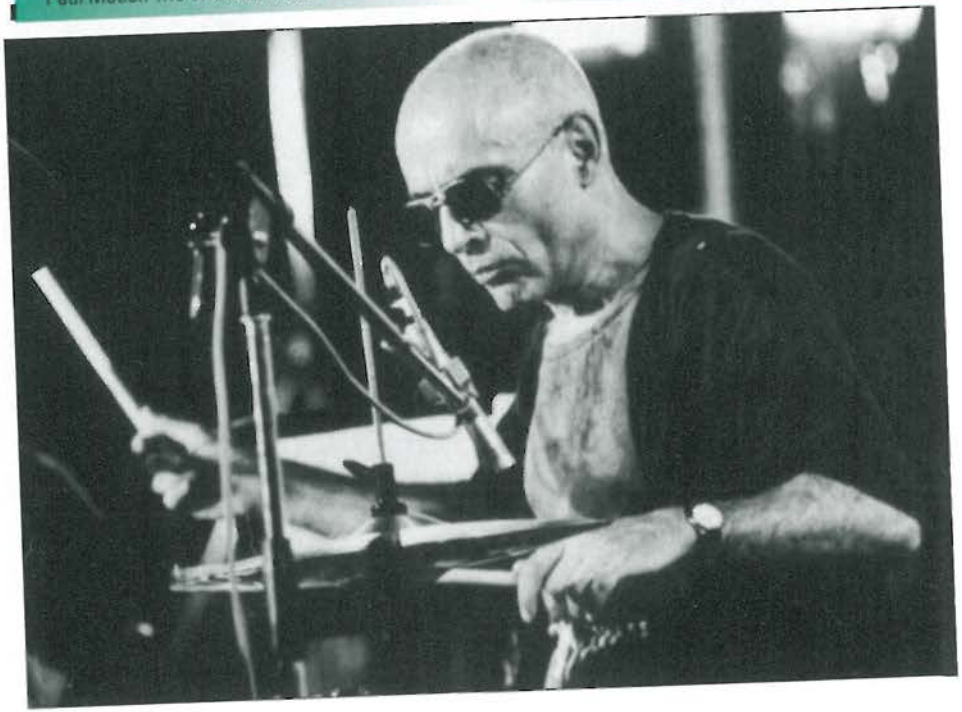
When he was sixteen, Motian's father bought him a car. Almost immediately the young drummer drove to New York for a weekend to make the rounds of the clubs. Motian fell in love with the jazz capital, hearing a lot of jazz on New York radio—most of it played by the famed jazz disc jockey "Symphony Sid" Torin. The primary excitement, however, was provided by the live music, for which there is no real substitute. The Dizzy Gillespie big band played opposite The George Shearing


Robert Lewis

In Motian

Here's a sampling of Paul Motian's recorded work over the past fifty years.

Artist	Album
Jerry Wald	Listen To The Music Of Jerry Wald (1955)
Bill Evans Trio	New Jazz Conceptions (1956)
George Russell	Jazz Workshop (1956)
Stan Getz	Jordu, Live (1957)
Eddie Costa Quartet	Guys And Dolls (1958)
Tony Scott	The Modern Art Of Jazz (1958)
Lennie Tristano	Live At The Half-Note (1958)
Lee Konitz	Live At The Half-Note (1959)
Zoot Sims	Jazz Alive: A Night At The Half-Note (1959)
Bill Evans Trio	Portraits In Jazz (1959)
Bill Evans Trio	Sunday At The Village Vanguard (1961)
Martial Solal Trio	Live (1962)
Paul Bley With Gary Peacock	Paul Bley With Gary Peacock (1964)
Charlie Haden	Liberation Music Orchestra (1969)
Arlo Guthrie	Comin' Into LA (1969)
Keith Jarrett	The Drums (1974)
Roswell Rudd	Small Band (1976)
Keith Jarrett	Survivor's Suite (1976)
Paul Motian	Conception Vessel (1972)
Don Cherry	Relativity Suite (1973)
Keith Jarrett	Bop-Be (1976)
Paul Motian	Dance (1977)
Paul Motian	Le Voyage (1979)
Paul Motian Trio With Bill Frisell	It Should've Happened A Long Time Ago (1984)
Bill Frisell	Rambler (1984)
Paul Bley	Fragments (1986)
Paul Bley Quartet	Paul Bley Quartet (1987)
Paul Motian	Monk In Motian (1988)
Joe Lovano	Village Rhythm (1988)
Paul Motian	On Broadway Volume I (1988)
Marilyn Crispell Trio	Live In Zurich (1989)
Joe Lovano	Worlds (Live) (1989)
Paul Motian	Bill Evans (1990)
Paul Motian & The Electric BeBop Band	Paul Motian &The Electric BeBop Band (1992)
Keith Jarrett Trio	At The Deerhead Inn (1992)
Paul Motian Trio	Trio I Sm (1993)
Lee Konitz	Rhapsody (1993)
Paul Motian & The Electric BeBop Band	Reincarnation Of A Love Bird (1994)
Helen Merrill	All Stars (1996)
Konitz, Swallow, Motian	Three Guys (1998)
Bill McHenry	Quartet (2002)
Marilyn Crispell Trio	Storyteller (2003)
Joe Lovano	Quartet (2003)
Paul Motian	Rarum (ECM compilation) (2004)
Paul Motian Trio With Bill Frisell And Joe Lovano	I Have The Room Above Her (2005)



Quintet at Bop City, a club once called The Hurricane, in the Brill Building on Broadway. Motian was also uplifted by an all-star band including Miles Davis, Fats Navarro, Bud Powell, Max Roach, and others at a downstairs club, also on Broadway. Overall it was an adventurous trip.

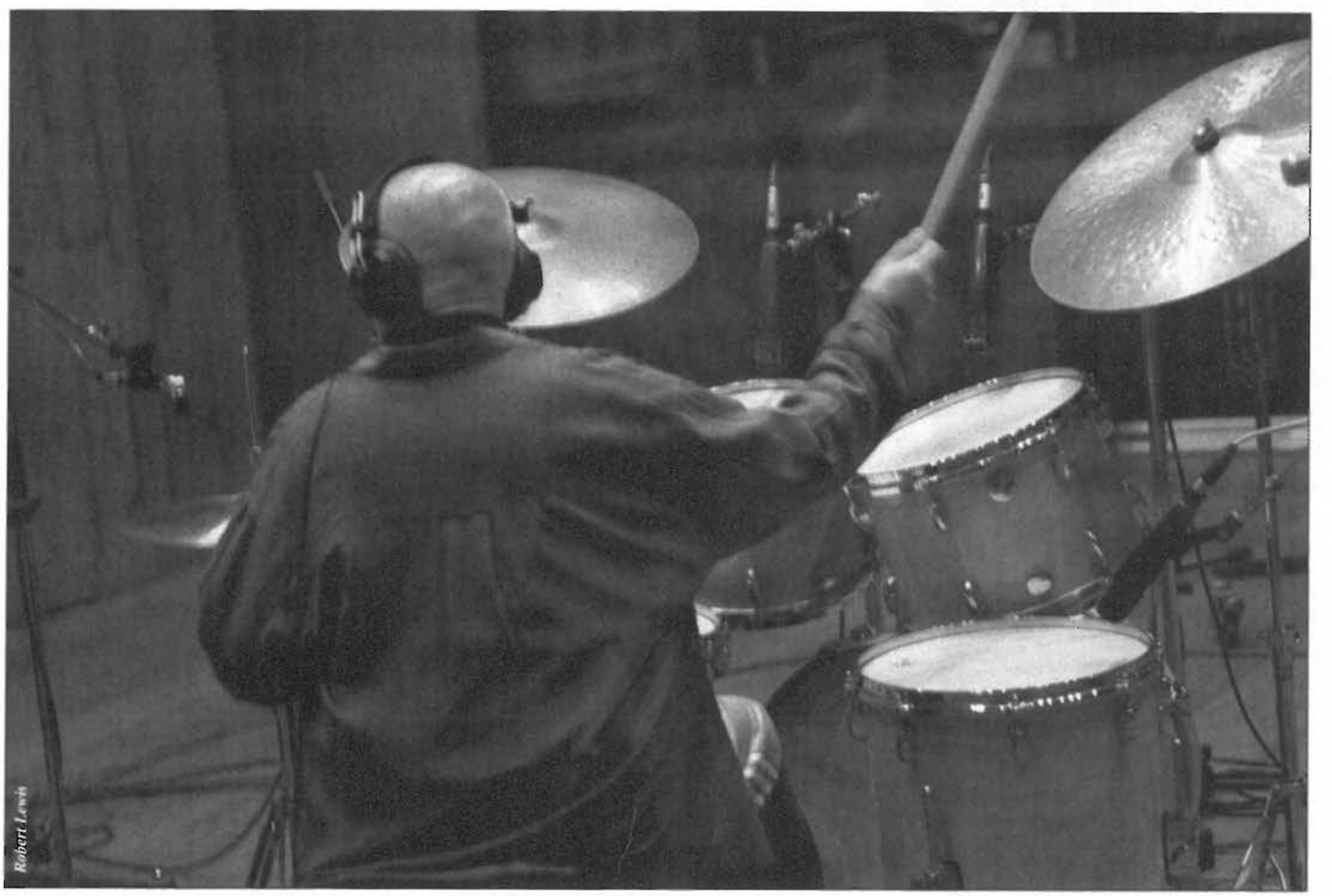
Motian's life continued to be obsessively centered on music. During the Korean War, he played in a Navy band. After being released from the service, he came to New York. The year was 1955. He studied at the Manhattan School of Music, but had to give it up because work began streaming in—first with the excellent jazz pianist George Wallington, then with almost *everyone*—Jerry Wald (where he met pianist Bill Evans), clarinetist Tony Scott, Gil Evans, Coleman Hawkins, Roy Eldridge, Art Farmer, pianist-vibraphonist Eddie Costa, pianist Paul Bley, Thelonious Monk, tenorist Stan Getz, singer Morgana King, Charles Lloyd, and other interesting players, many of whom are identified with the so-called avant-garde, such as bassist-composer Charlie Haden, trombonist Roswell Rudd, and composer-theorist George Russell.

Obviously there was something in Motian's playing that appealed to players across the board. That "thing" was his ability to get deep into the music, simultaneously provoking and bringing a sense of comfort and relaxation to players, regardless of style or inclination.

"How I got to play with Monk for the first time was a fortunate accident," Motian says. "I was living on Ninth Street and Third Avenue, and one night I dropped in at The Open Door, a club in the area. Drummer Art Taylor couldn't make the job. So producer Bob Reisner asked me to play the session. I ran home as quickly as I could and got my equipment. I remember talking briefly to Monk. The subject of rushing tempo came up: 'Hitting the drummer on the side of the head is an excellent cure for rushing,' Monk commented."

Motian's need to play was so intense after he got to New York that sticks or brushes were seldom out of his hands. From the mid '50s to the late '60s, he played every day in a variety of circumstances. "Three hundred sixty-five days a year," the drummer insists. That's just one of the reasons for his impressive and wide-ranging résumé. He learned what to play and what not to play from some great teachers—from Roy Eldridge to Arlo Guthrie (at Woodstock), from Coleman Hawkins to Bill Evans, from Stan Getz to Paul Bley, from Lennie Tristano to Morgana King, from Mose Allison to Charlie Haden, from Joe Lovano to Charles Lloyd, from Bobby Hackett to John Coltrane, and from Bob Brookmeyer to Don Cherry.

For all his diverse experiences in music, Motian is most frequently remembered for his work with pianist Bill Evans, particularly the trio featuring the extraordinary bassist Scott LaFaro. The trio was notable for three-way improvisatory interaction and a loosening up of the playing process. LaFaro became famous for his performances with that trio. His work was an extension, on a smaller instrumental scale, of what bassist Jimmy Blanton had done with The Duke Ellington Orchestra. The trio was also a major step forward for Motian. The group was no longer just a pianist and two accompanists. It was more like three equal individ-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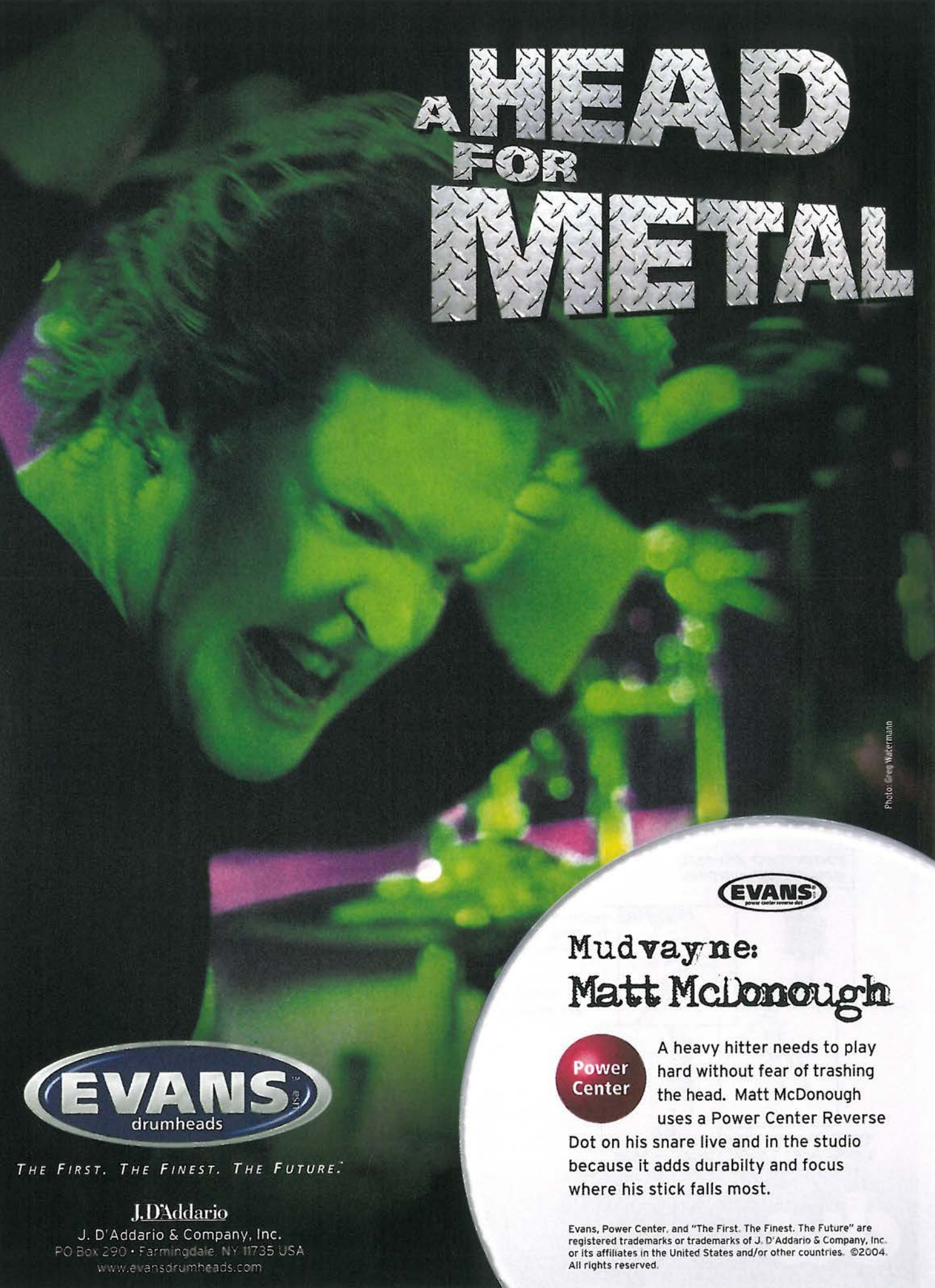
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Location: Wembley Arena, London, England
Lenny Kravitz Tour

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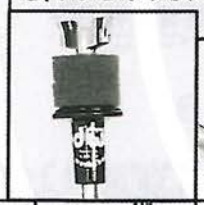

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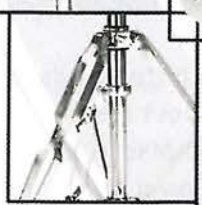

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Paul Motian

uals, feeding and inspiring one another.

Motian played quietly, commenting when he felt it necessary, playing his own "interpretive" version of time. He was making his way to his own view of ultimate freedom that would emerge in years to come with his own bands and with many advanced players.

After six years, Motian felt compelled to leave the Evans trio. "We played so softly, we were hardly moving," the drummer says. "By this time [1964], Scott had died in an auto accident. And I needed more freedom and stimulation. So I left, although Bill pleaded with me to stay on."

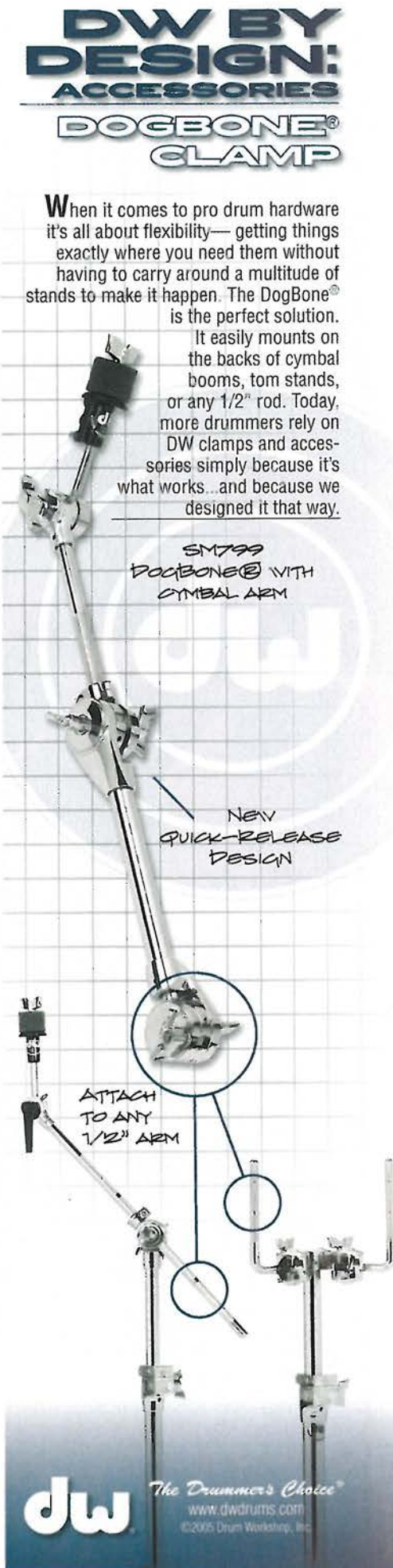
Motian found what he needed in his own bands, and with musicians who thought the way he did. This is best documented on a number of ECM recordings—those Motian made with Bley and Gary Peacock, as well as pianists Marilyn Crispell and Keith Jarrett. Particularly of note are Jarrett's *Survivors' Suite* and *At The Deer Head Inn*, as well as four Motian CDs—*Conception Vessel, Dance, Paul Motian—Rarum* (selected recordings), and *It Should Have Happened A Long Time Ago*. Motian is brilliant throughout.

Motian has become internationally known for his "advanced" work as a drummer and composer. He is essentially a self-taught composer who works carefully until he achieves what he wants at the piano. "I'm not exactly Cole Porter," he explains, chuckling once again. "But I generally find what I'm going for."

Everything he is doing both as a drummer and writer these days is an outgrowth of all he has done throughout his career. Motian makes records and works with a trio with Joe Lovano and Bill Frisell. He does dates with his Electric Bebop Band—put together "to destroy bebop," because Motian felt there was no one around who could play the music. But the group turned out to be a far more positive experience than the negative one he had anticipated. The band includes two tenors, two guitars, drums, and electric bass. Motian also plays with other groups and individuals who aren't ashamed of trying to move music in various interesting directions. The music might be difficult to assimilate, but it's worth the effort.

Paul Motian came to music in the years of bebop and has since played with people who preceded him on the scene and others who are a generation or so younger. It doesn't seem to matter to him. It's all just music, and he calls on multiple experiences and responds to all of it with no preconceptions as to how it should be played.

Certainly Motian's career in music has been anything but circumscribed. What will he do next? Considering the evidence of over a half century, his work will not be retrogressive, or concerned with nostalgia. He will remain cutting-edge.



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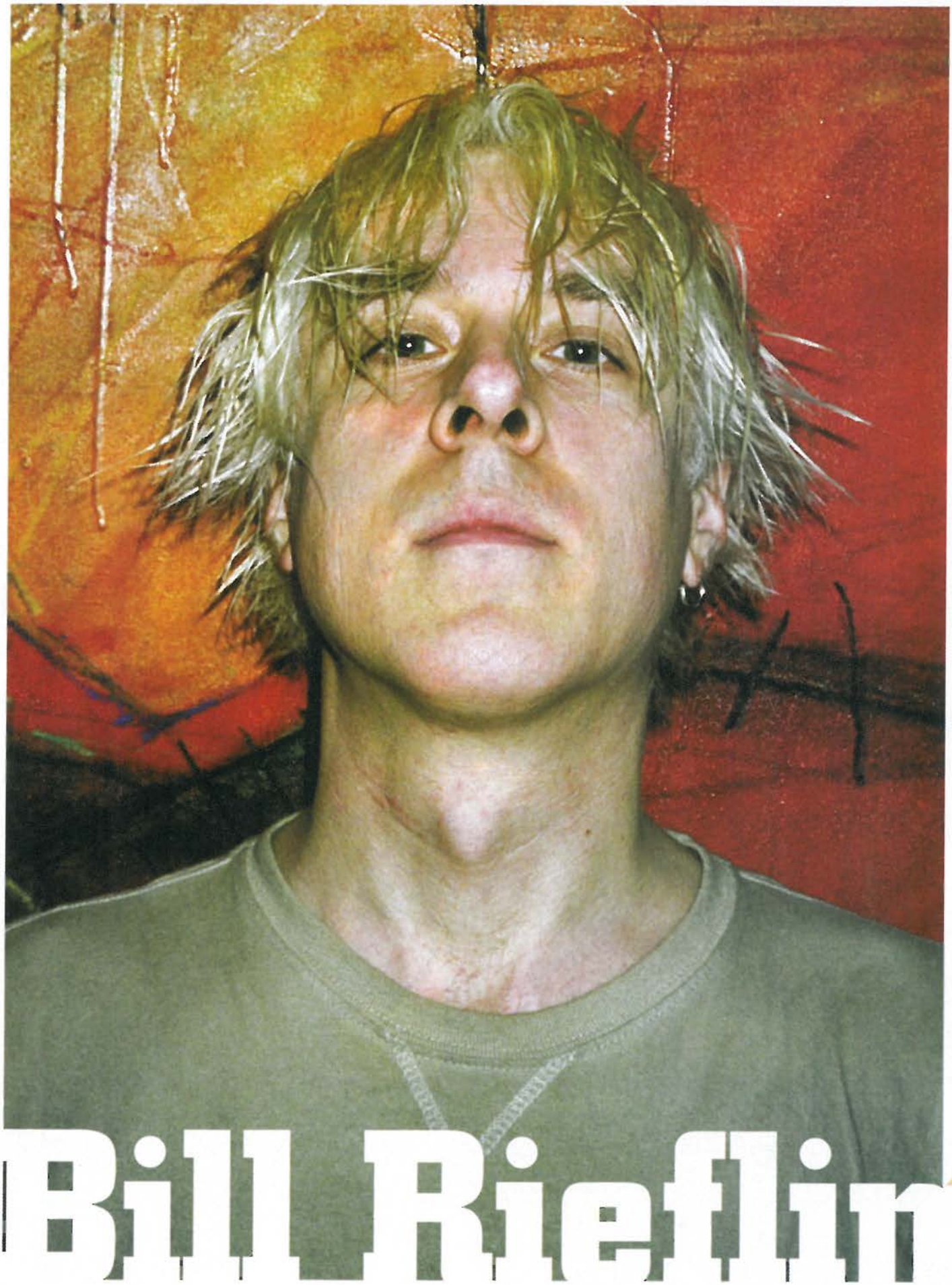


Bill Rieflin

R.E.M.'s Gentle Giant

Story by Jon Wurster
Photos by David Belisle

"Honestly, I don't remember, sorry to say," replies R.E.M. drummer Bill Rieflin when asked what it felt like the first time he counted off the band's smash hit "Losing My Religion" before a paying audience. "On those early gigs I was just trying to hold on and not play the songs at twice the performance tempo." Heck, you'd be a little nervous too if faced with the prospect of filling the shoes of a founding member of one of modern rock's most celebrated bands.

In truth, it probably seemed a little odd to some when word came in early 2003 that Rieflin would be taking over drumming duties for R.E.M. (Original drummer Bill Berry left the band in 1997 and was replaced by Joey Waronker.) Odd, because up until that time, Rieflin was known primarily for supplying the pounding, jackhammer rhythms for such industrial music heavyweights as Ministry, Revolting Cocks, and Pigface. While it's true that the aggressive stomp of Ministry's "Stigmata" is a hundred eighty degrees away from the folky melodicism of the aforementioned "Losing My Religion," those who had followed Rieflin's moves closely no doubt saw this latest endeavor as just another surprising twist in a very eventful and unpredictable career. One listen to his tasteful, temperate drumming on R.E.M.'s new album, *Around The Sun*, proves without a doubt that Rieflin is no one-trick pony.

The Seattle native began his professional musical journey as a teenager in the mid to late '70s as a member of two seminal bands, The Telepaths and The Blackouts. The latter, a hard-hitting post-punk outfit that relied heavily on Rieflin's hypnotic, odd-time rhythmic pulse, would go on to release a handful of recordings, including 1983's *Lost Souls*, which was produced by Al Jourgensen, frontman for the then synth pop–inclined Ministry.

The relationship with Jourgensen would bear unexpected fruit three years later, when, after disbanding The Blackouts, Rieflin, keyboardist Roland Barker, and bassist Paul Barker joined a revamped, much heavier-sounding Ministry. Rieflin remained an integral part of the Ministry camp for the following eight years, playing on such genre-defining records as *Land Of Rape And Honey* and *Psalm 69*, and participating in many of the often hilariously named and sonically aggressive projects released through Chicago's Wax Trax! record label.

Internal tensions eventually took their toll, and in 1994 Rieflin left Ministry in an effort to find peace of mind and seek out new musical horizons. Now a free agent, Rieflin found his services much in demand as he landed recording work with a wide array of artists, including Peter Murphy, Robert Fripp, Swans, Krist Novoselic, Chris Connelly, Nine Inch Nails, Chris Cornell, and KMFDM.

It's important to note that Rieflin's role in many of these projects was not necessarily that of drummer. A true multi-instrumentalist, he could often be found contributing whatever the session required, be it guitar, keyboards, bass, or acting as producer.

The final year of the twentieth century was to be a watershed for Rieflin; it saw the release of his first solo album, *Birth Of A Giant*, and perhaps more crucially, the forging of a connection that would lead to his being asked to play with one of the most successful and influential bands of the last two decades.

When speaking with Bill Rieflin, one thing quickly becomes clear: He really *thinks* about music—not in a rigid, studious way, but in a manner that's natural, almost *spiritual*. Rieflin's comments on the importance of "being in the now" and remaining present at all times are at once obvious and revelatory. They help paint a picture of an artist possessing a deep desire to get *inside* the music and explore its effects on composer, performer, and listener.

MD: You're a great example of a drummer who has succeeded in some very different genres: From playing with Ministry and Nine Inch Nails to your recent work with The Minus Five and R.E.M. How important do you think it is for a drummer to be versed in different styles?

Bill: If someone is only interested in the color orange, then learning how to do orange really well, by focusing on orange, will serve that particular interest or need. However, it's not often understood—particularly by young, eager, often impatient players—that learning red, blue, and yellow can help you do orange much better. This might not have as much to do with different genres and styles as much as having a good solid footing in the basics needed for good technique. Good technique allows flexibility.

MD: Speaking of the basics, did you have much formal training or participate in traditional school bands?

Bill: I began life as an ardent music listener. The more I consider it, the more I think that being a music listener is perhaps the most important feature of my musical life. I clearly remember being asked by my mother, while she was on the phone, if I wanted to take piano lessons. I said yes, though not automatically. My impression, thirty-seven years later, is that I needed to decide then and there. I had no sense of this being a major life decision, but it surely was. I mention this to underscore the idea that while being a music lover, I had no early ambitions to play, certainly no one instrument specifically. It was only because my mother knew I loved music that she thought I might want to play piano. Lessons continued for ten years, not always happily.

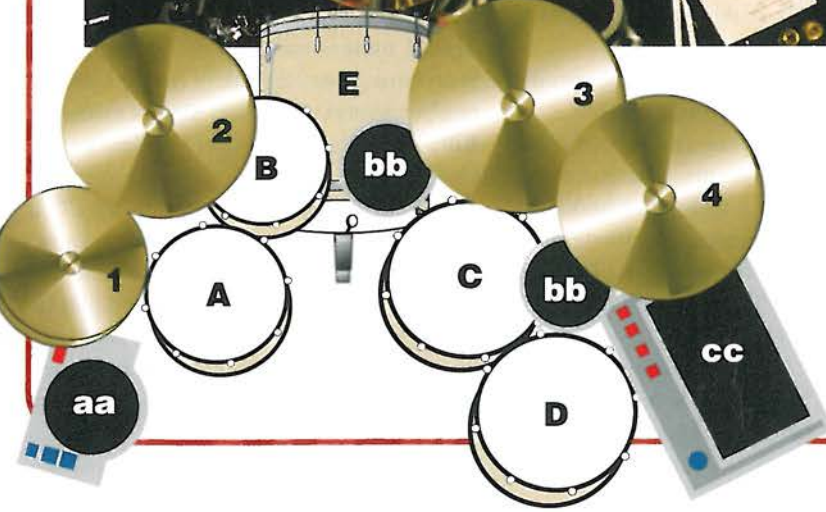
I had very limited drumming instruction. My mother once coerced me into taking lessons from a fife & drum teacher. That was short-lived. I didn't play in the school band. It was all way too square for me. It's not that I had no interest; I was openly antagonistic toward anything I thought as "normal."

MD: Do you have any regrets about not taking lessons, or do you think that helped you forge your own style and sound?

Bill: It's too late to regret it, but if I could go back in time and talk to my younger self, I would absolutely demand that he take lessons. It's so important just to learn the basics: how to hold a stick...how to use your body efficiently...how to sit behind a drumkit...where your feet are meant to fall on the pedal...how to move from your hips and your ankles and toes...sitting and posture...balance...all that stuff. It would have made me such a better player.

MD: Who were some of the artists that got you excited about music and inspired you during those formative years?

Bill: Like most every young person growing up in the '60s, The Beatles were everything. Anything that anyone has ever said or written about the magic and mystery and the excitement and awesomeness of The Beatles goes for me too.



Drums Around The Sun

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B. 11x13 rack tom
C. 16x16 floor tom
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E. 16x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste
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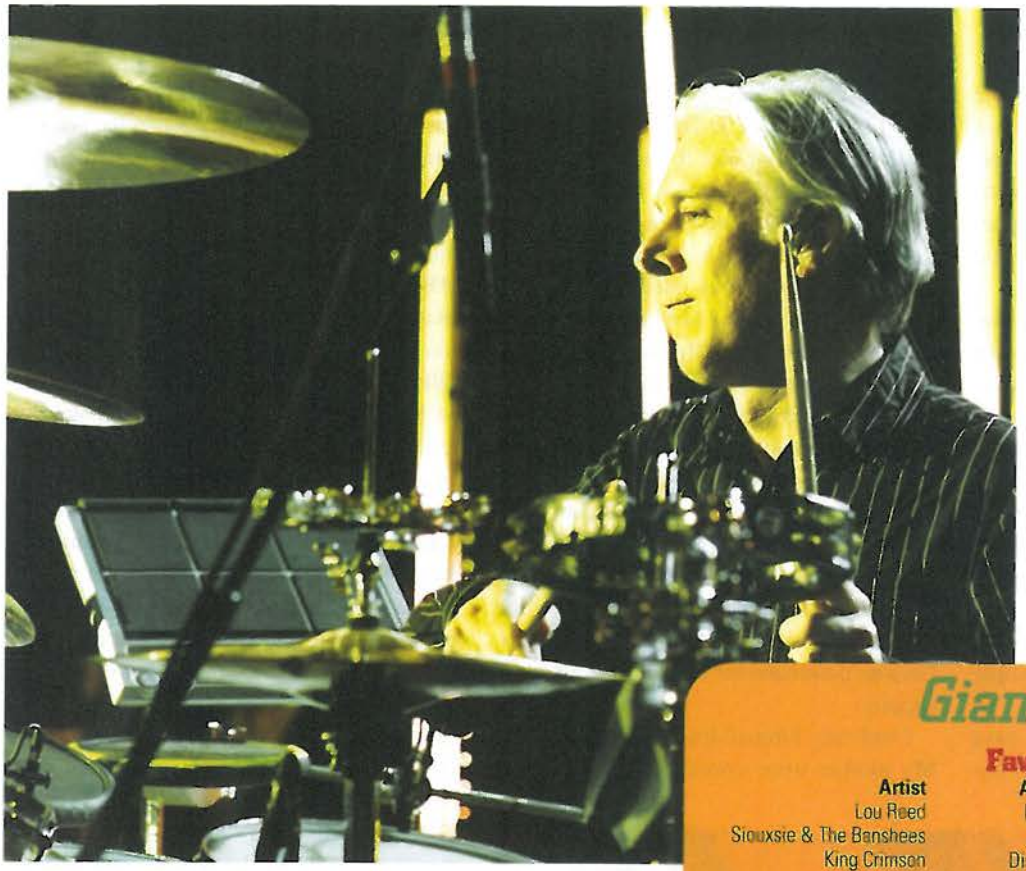
2. 18" 2002 crash
3. 20" Signature Dry ride
4. 19" 2002 crash

Electronics: Roland
aa. Handsonic
bb. PD-7 pads
cc. SPD-S sampling pad/controller

Heads: Remo coated Emperors. ("I used Ambassadors last year.")

Sticks: Regal Tip 5B



"It's kind of a terrible thing to admit, but I think it's a good quality in a musician to be able to say, 'I can't do this.'"

Giant Steps

Favorites

Artist	Album	Drummer
Lou Reed	Berlin	Aynsley Dunbar
Siouxsie & The Banshees	JuJu	Budgie
King Crimson	Discipline	Bill Bruford
Kip Hanrahan	Desire Develops An Edge	Kip Hanrahan
Sonny Rollins	Saxophone Colossus	Max Roach
The Meters	"Cissy Strut"	Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste
Elvin Jones	anything	Elvin Jones
The Beatles	anything	Ringo Starr

Recordings

Artist	Album
R.E.M.	Around The Sun
The Minus Five	In Rock
Chris Connelly	Shipwreck
Rieflin/Fripp/Gunn	The Repercussions Of Angelic Behavior
Swans	The Great Annihilator
Bill Rieflin	Birth Of A Giant
The Blackouts	History In Reverse

My parents, like most other parents of that time, had a pretty good collection of show-tune records: Lerner & Lowe, Rogers & Hammerstein, etc. My favorite was *Camelot*. I listened to pop radio of the day; The Doors and Credence easily come to mind. In 1972, I was loaned [David Bowie's] *The Rise And Fall Of Ziggy Stardust And The Spiders From Mars*. I fell in love with that record. I bought his *Pin-Ups* album the week it was released. Woody Woodmansy had been replaced on drums by Aynsley Dunbar by then, and someone asked me which drummer I liked more. It was the first time I had been asked to discern between different players. After serious consideration, I had decided that Aynsley was a more interesting, exciting, musical, and dynamic player. I've loved his playing ever since, particularly on that record.

MD: In addition to drums, you play guitar, bass, and keyboards. How do you think this has benefited you?

Bill: It's been extremely important and useful to me to be able to play melodic instruments, if only for variety's sake. It allows me a fuller understanding of the music I'm involved with. I also find it quite useful to be able to communicate with musicians in terms of the instruments *they* play. Conversely, I've worked with some non-drummers who could benefit from a few years of drumming experience. In 1989 I took some guitar lessons through [the Robert Fripp–founded school] Guitar Craft, and I really started getting into doing things "right," as it were.

MD: Guitar Craft teaches a very specific way of holding and playing the guitar....

Bill: Well, it's a very *natural* way of doing it. It's the same as drums: The instrument comes to the body, so there is a natural way for the body to be most comfortable. I started to apply some of these ideas and principals to my drumming. And in 1992, when I was preparing for a tour with Ministry, all of a sudden I came to the conclusion that I didn't know how to get better. I had gone as far as I could on my own, and I recognized that. There's a drum school in town—Seattle Drum School—and I called them up and said I wanted lessons.

MD: For how long?

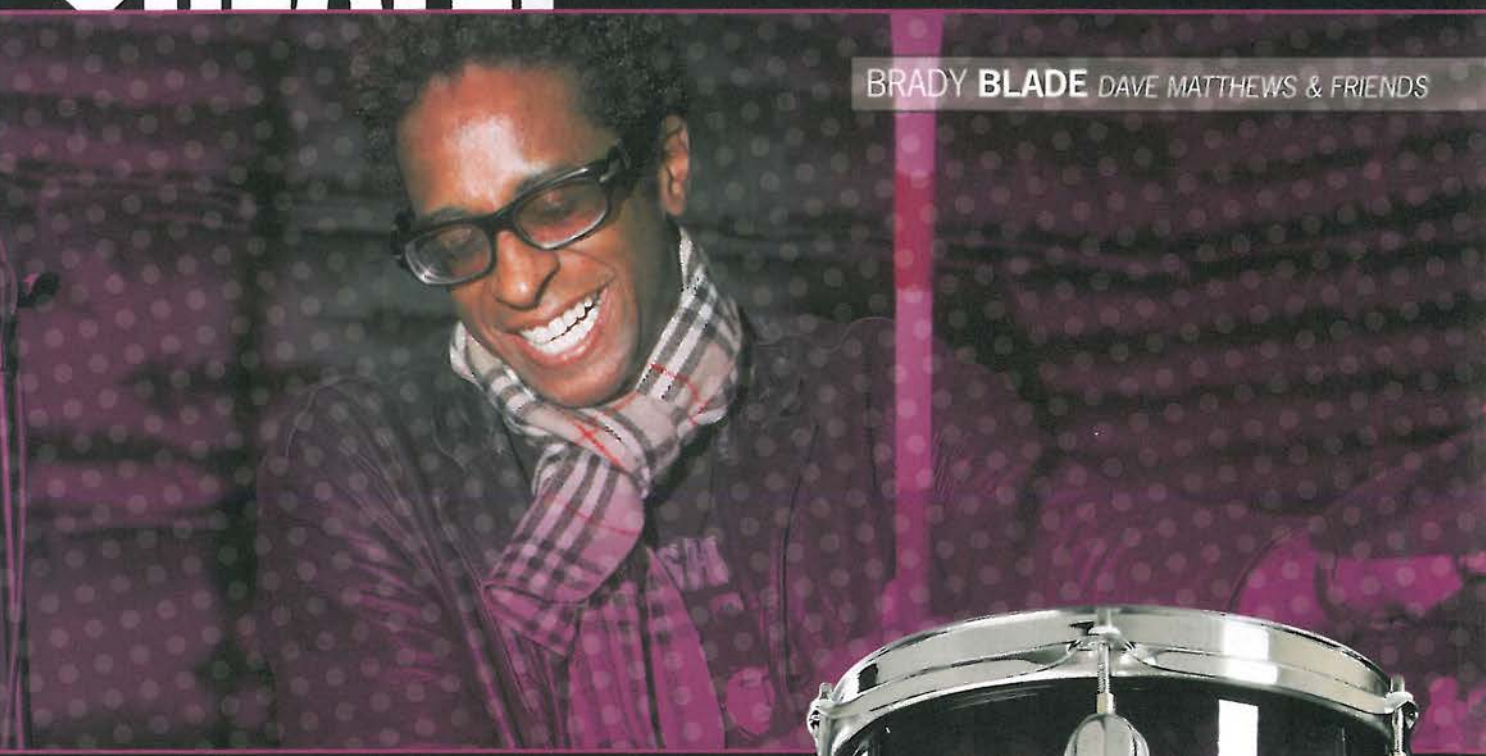
Bill: About three or four months. It was mostly working on hand stuff, not kit stuff.

MD: I understand you also took some instruction from [legendary Santana drummer/percussionist] Michael Shrieve recently.

Bill: I ran into Michael here in Seattle and said, "Come and show me some things." He asked, "What do you want to learn?" I said, "Show me something I don't know how to do"...which is a lot of stuff. So we sat for a few hours in my room and played through some things, and it was challenging and fun. The first thing we did together was play a really slow groove and focus on breathing.

MAPEX

CREATE.



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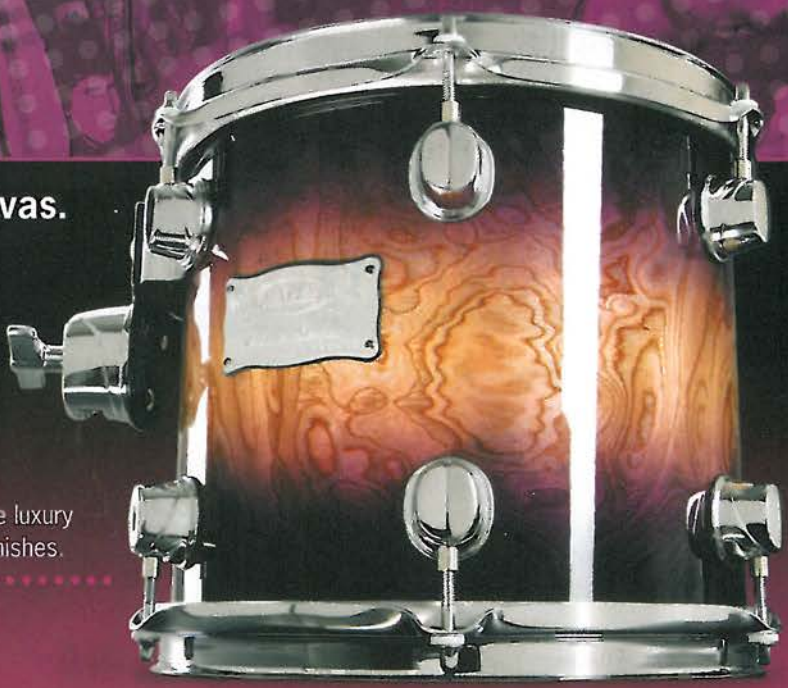

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Bill Rieflin

I ran into Matt Chamberlain at a party once and asked him, "What would you say is the most important thing in playing?" I don't think he even took a beat, and he said, "Breathing." He was the first guy who ever said that to me. And I thought, "Aaah, I like that; no wonder you're so dang good."

MD: Breathing is obviously very important. How does breathing relate particularly to drumming?

Bill: Well, your body will of course breathe by itself. But if you were to just sit and focus on your breathing, it gets a lot weirder, because you find that you're *involved* with your breathing. For me, I find the most challenging thing is to just sit and notice the breathing without getting involved in it. To actually do something like that while playing drums sounds like a monumental feat.

MD: On a similar subject, I read an interview where you spoke about how essential it is to be "in the now" of it all. Could you elaborate on that?

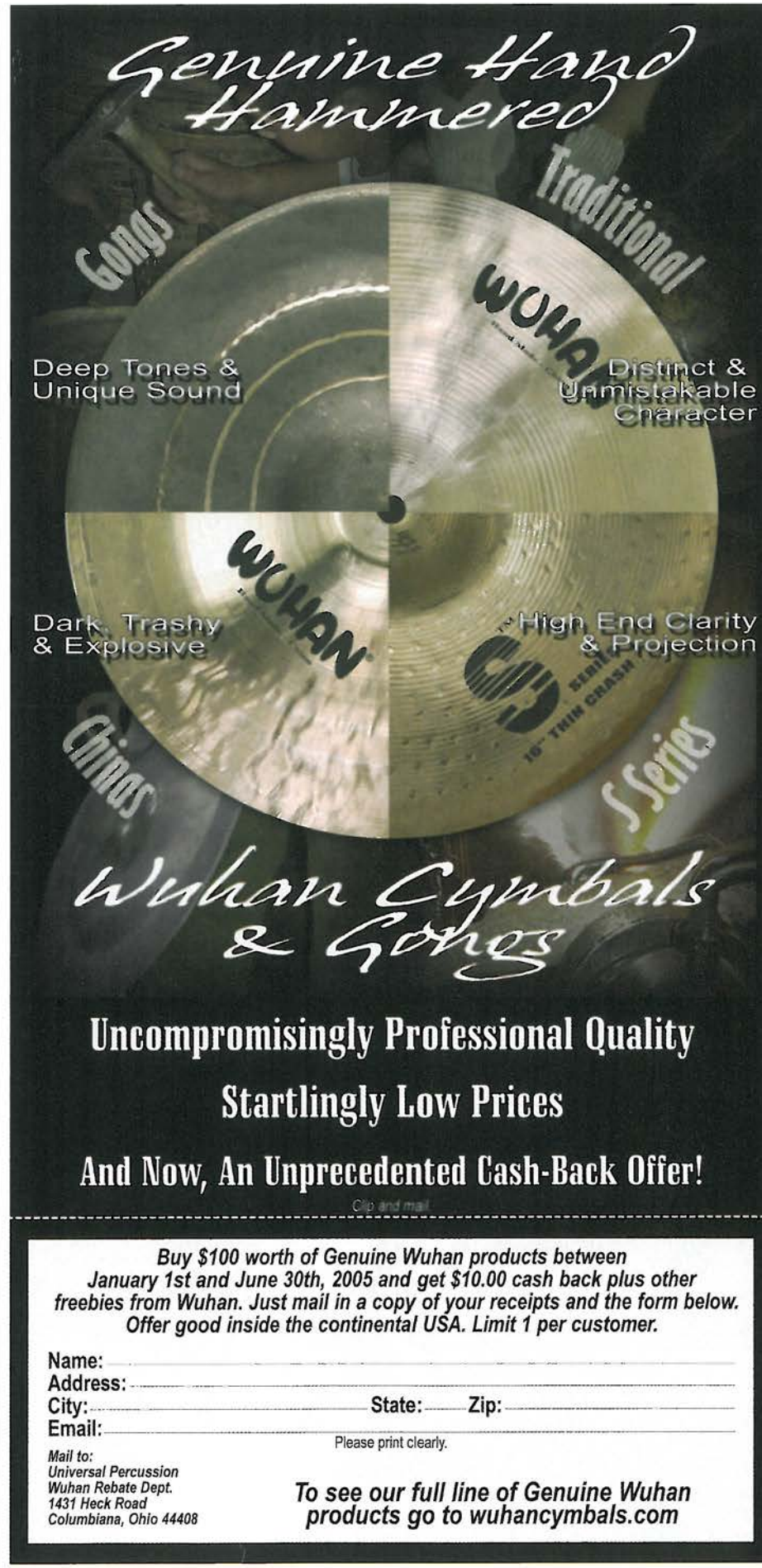
Bill: The other night we were in Vancouver. It was a really fantastic show and I noticed that something would happen on the side of the stage, and I'd be distracted. I'd look over there and think to myself, "I don't want my attention to be there; I want to be *in the performance*." If I can put myself in my body and feel everything as it's happening, that really helps put me back into the moment. So, as far as being "in the now" and being present, I return to the physical sensation and that helps me a

lot. It's very practical, because if you're onstage and you're just kind of going to sleep and something happens that you're not prepared for, then you've lost it; the moment's gone and you've missed out. Being "alive" during a performance is incredibly important.

MD: In the late '80s and early '90s you were heavily involved with the likes of Ministry and Pigface. There seems to have been a real "collective" vibe to these bands, with nobody tied down to a specific role. You played drums or programmed on some tracks, and played guitar and keyboards on others. How did those projects come about, and how was it decided who would play what?

Bill: Everything happened in the studio. There was very little pre-production. We would go to the studio and start making

"If I could go back in time and talk to my younger self, I would absolutely *demand* that he take lessons."



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records. Different combinations of people would have their own band names, and Al was always thinking up different projects for various combinations of people. The general rules of the game were that if you were around during recording, you were a part of the project. I never lived in Chicago, so I wasn't always around.

One of the things that made work difficult for me is that the sessions were often chemically fueled. Being the straightest man in show biz, this left me at a disadvantage energy-wise and stamina-wise. I found no joy spending days on end in the studio, the options for participation becoming less as the sessions dragged on. The initial creative spark was often taken over by a megalomaniacal haze.

MD: What do you think you learned drumwise from those projects?

Bill: Mostly precision, consistency, endurance, and metronomic playing. I also learned that those early Simmons pads will ruin your elbow. One result of existing in the studio is that roles can be more fluid. The drummer in a live band needs to be the drummer. But if it's all on tape, there's more flexibility and opportunities to do other things.

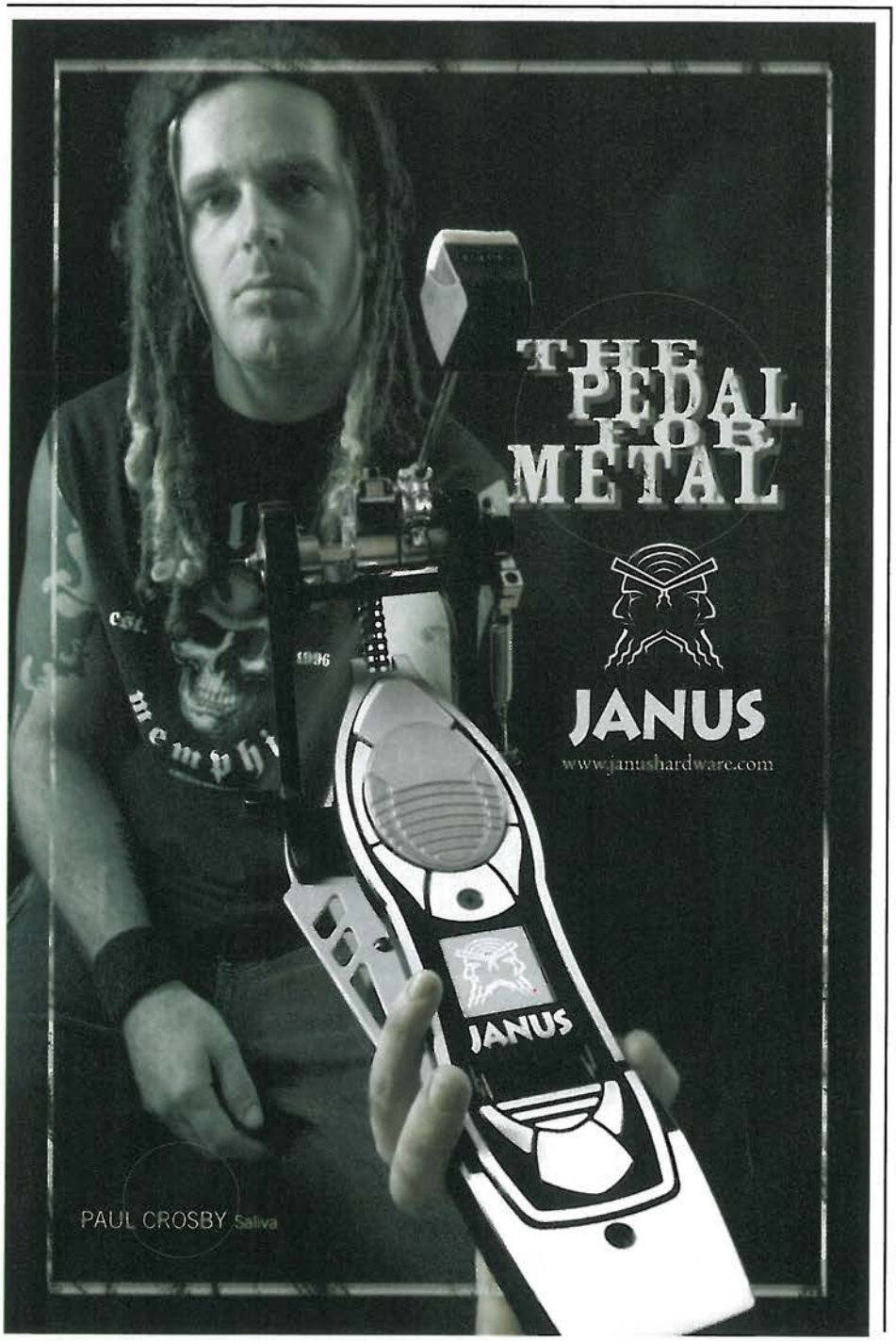
MD: There are reports that relations between you and Jourgensen were straining by the time of 1995's *Filth Pig*. Did you already have a plan for where you were going next as your time in Ministry was coming to an end?

Bill: In the end, there was no reason to be in Ministry. Relationships were indeed strained, the music was of zero interest to me, and Jourgensen balked at paying me what I asked for. When I started playing with Ministry in '86 it was all very computer, synthesizer, and noise based. Those records were pretty interesting for that time, and we had a lot of fun doing them. And then Al got more interested in guitar rock music like on [1992's] *Psalm 69*. I'm just not interested in that metal guitar rock; it bores the crap out of me. I've been known to say, with great pride, that my last act in Ministry was to refuse to play on their version of Dylan's "Lay Lady Lay," which appeared on *Filth Pig*.

When I left Ministry, I didn't have a plan per se. My first concern was getting the hell out of there. My second concern was, "Well, what now?" Until that time, I had always been in a band. And bands tend to be fairly insular organizations. Now I was free-floating. I needed to re-examine what I do, and what I wanted to do. Of course, there is always the question of how to pay the rent. Fortunately, work came knocking at my door. The first week after leaving Ministry, I was in LA recording with my friends Chris Bruce [Waterboys, Seal] and Wendy & Lisa [Prince & The Revolution]. I quickly decided that variety of experience was something I wanted and needed.

MD: You were very much living a freelance existence at that time. What were some of the plusses and minuses of not being tied down to one specific endeavor?

Bill: One of the good parts was participating in a huge variety of work with a lot of people and doing things that I wouldn't normally do. I gave myself a lot of experiences that I missed out on being in a very specialized band. The downside of course was being essentially an unknown guy, without an agent or manager. I never knew where the money was going to come from, and I never knew when I'd work again. I never starved, but it did give me a little stress.



MD: You recorded your solo album, [1999's] *Birth Of A Giant*, during that time. Was that something that had been gestating for a while?

Bill: There were a number of ideas bubbling in me that I no longer had a reasonable excuse to ignore. And I had the time to work on them. The "solo record" can be an iffy thing, often born from egotism, boredom, or in some cases, necessity. I was fortunate enough to rope in a few talented people to lend a hand, such as Robert Fripp and Chris Connelly. I think it's a generally successful record and I'm sorry to report that I've got another one up my sleeve.

MD: Now we're closing in on your entrance into the world of R.E.M. How did that come about?

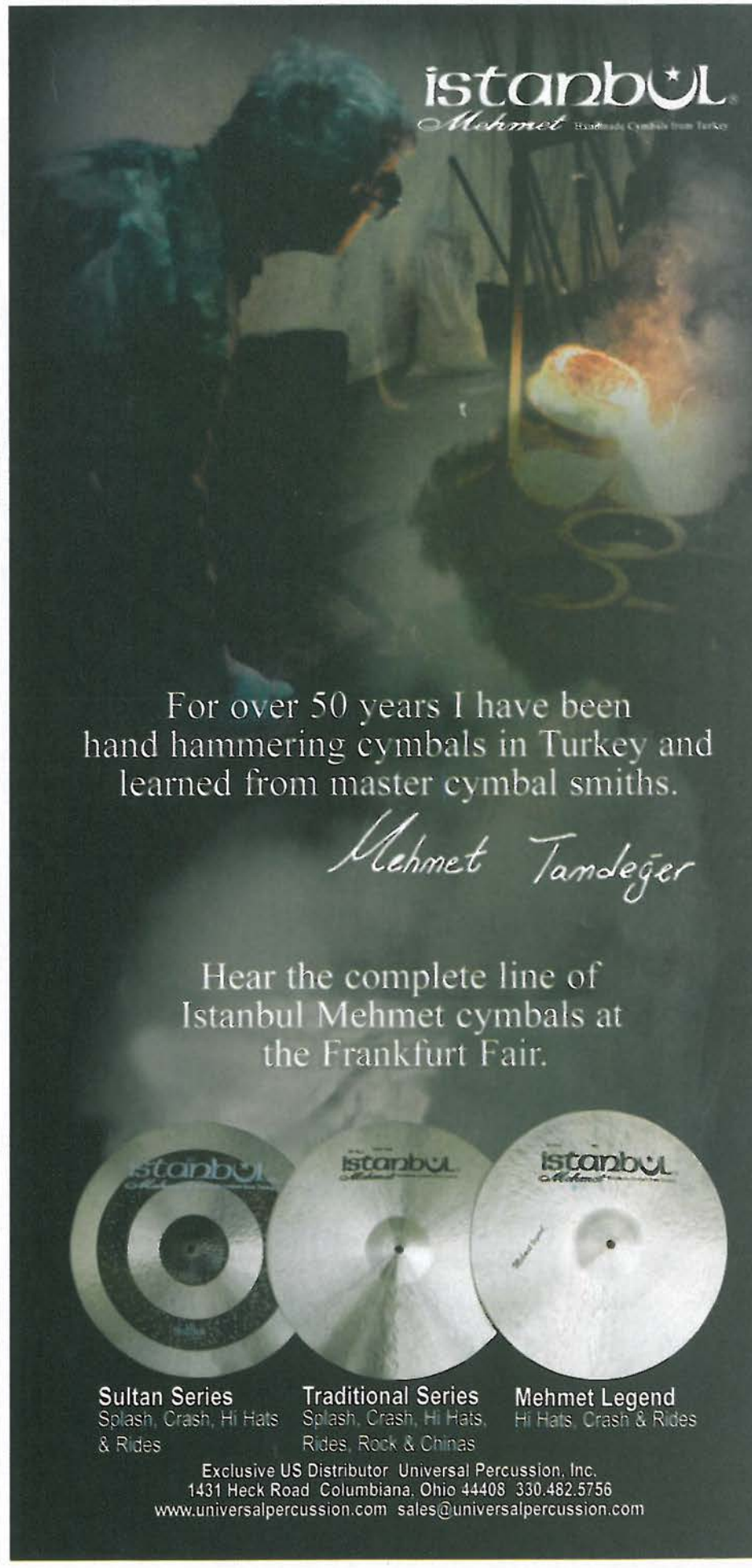
Bill: While trying to drum up some interest [laughs] in *Birth Of A Giant*, the publicist I was working with suggested I meet Scott McCaughey [leader of the Seattle-based Minus Five and R.E.M. tour multi-instrumentalist]. Though I had known of Scott for years and had sort of crossed paths with him here and there, we'd never formally met. Sometime in '99 he asked if I wanted to play an upcoming Minus Five show and I said yes. The bassist of the Minus Five is Peter Buck. Peter, as most will know, is the guitarist for R.E.M.

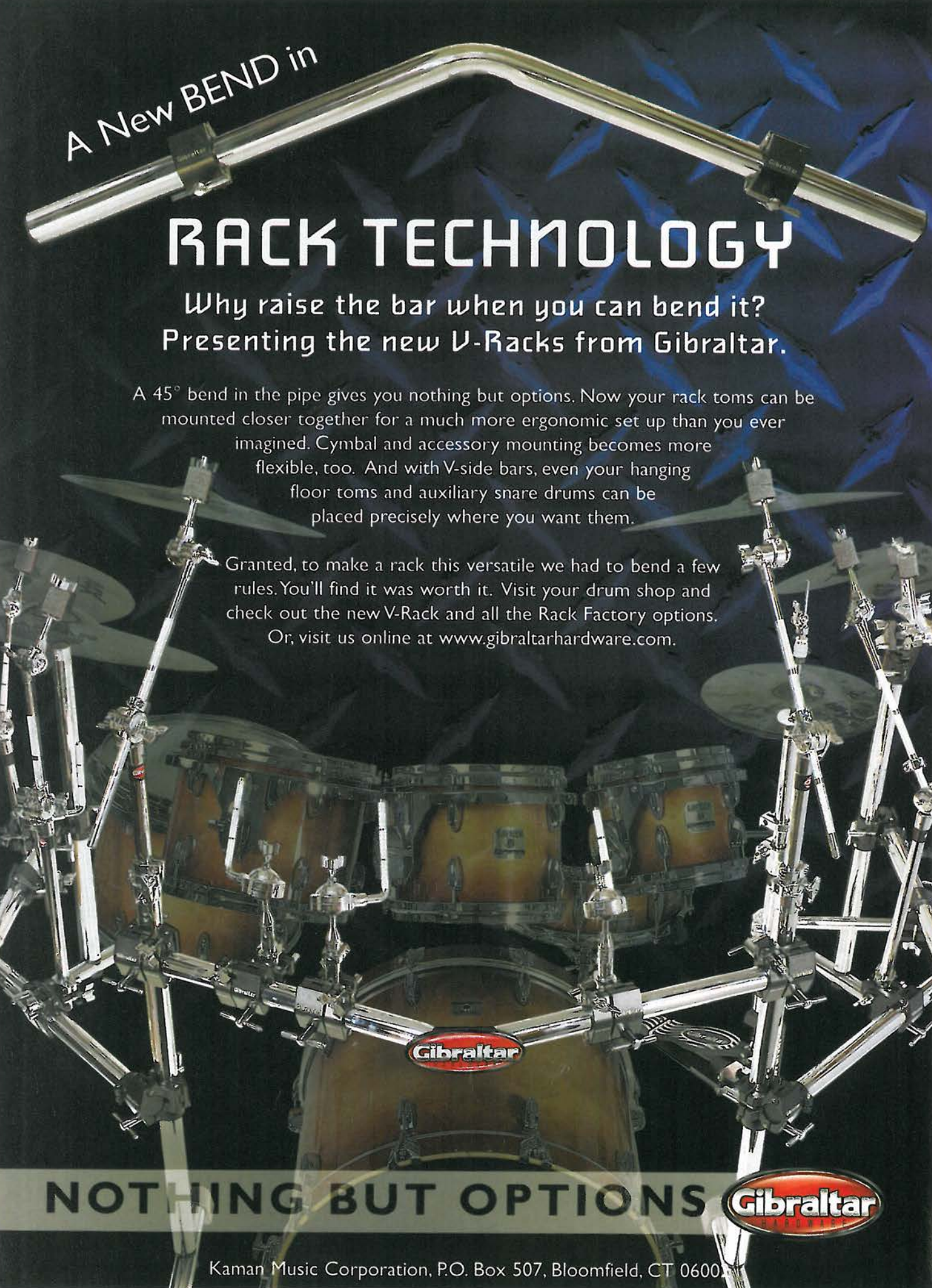
When R.E.M. was preparing to begin work on what was to become *Around The Sun*, I was asked if I wanted to do a few weeks of recording. A few weeks became a few more weeks. Eventually I was asked to do the European tour, then the US tour. Then I guess they just got used to me hanging around. Perhaps at that point it was too much trouble to get someone else.

When I first began recording with R.E.M. in Vancouver, Scott had booked a Minus Five gig at a place called Richards On Richards in December of 2002. R.E.M. played three songs with me on drums that night. According to [R.E.M. bassist Mike] Mills, that was when he new that he'd like to play with me, that we could have fun playing together.

MD: The Wax Trax! scene seems somewhat removed from R.E.M.'s. Were you aware of what R.E.M. was doing during the '80s and '90s?

Bill: It's probably fair to say that though aware of R.E.M., I didn't know their records. I knew pretty much what your average radio-listening, MTV-watching

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American knew about them. "Losing My Religion" was the first time I stopped to listen; a lot of it had to do with the video.

MD: Do you think they found it refreshing that you didn't have that much familiarization with their oeuvre, that you weren't going to be fazed by "the legend," so to speak?

Bill: I know what you mean, but I don't know if that has benefited me in any way particularly. If anything it made it harder for me because I had to learn all those damn songs. [laughs]

MD: You've stated elsewhere that you really immersed yourself in Bill Berry's drumming when you began playing with R.E.M.

Bill: When I was asked to do the tour, and because it was a "greatest hits" tour, I decided early on that I would do my best to play those songs as Bill Berry would. This meant not only learning the drum parts more or less verbatim, but I had to learn his *feel*. After all, a drummer's feel largely determines how the music feels overall. And R.E.M. is R.E.M. in large part because of Bill's feel; that's one of the reasons the music is so well loved.

I can't say if it was an easy thing to do, and I'm not really in a position to judge how successful I've been. What I did was listen to those songs night and day in order to find what made Bill tick. I suppose it's something like an FBI profiler hunting down a serial murderer; you want to get into their skin, to discover what they're all about. A person's feel comes out of who they are. Once you find the key, the rest falls into place; you become familiar with the choices they make. Eventually I found something I could work with. After that things became easier.

MD: How is playing in R.E.M. different from other situations in which you've been involved?

Bill: R.E.M. can be seen as a system of various playing styles, feels, and approaches. With only a few people, things quickly become complex. Listening is the key—as it always is—which allows any musician to respond. The thing I'm constantly reminded of is that there is absolutely no sleeping when playing with R.E.M. You never know what will happen next. R.E.M. in one way has been one of the hardest things I've had to do. They have a very unique sense of themselves and how they play and how they play together. I don't think that any drummer can just step in and expect it to work off the bat. I've worked through a couple different strategies—how to play and pull everything together so it sounds cohesive, so it sounds like music.

MD: I'm curious as to how the songs on *Around The Sun* were presented to you. Were they in semi-realized demo form, or were they just sketches that you, Mike, and Peter built from?

Bill: Some were in semi-realized demo form, some in fully realized demo form, some in the form of "Let's try this and see what happens." [Vocalist] Michael [Stipe] would often sing during tracking to help with the overall feeling of the performance.

MD: Would Peter and Mike show you ideas they'd like you to try, or were you free to come up with your own parts?

Bill: It all depends. Sometimes, someone will want to hear something specific, sometimes we'll just begin playing and see what happens. Sometimes I'll set out to do something "interesting" or different; sometimes I just do my best to keep out of the way. Like every good musical

group, the best idea wins, regardless of who has it.

MD: There's an understated sound and vibe to *Around The Sun*. On songs like "Make It All Ok" and "I Wanted To Be Wrong," did you ever find yourself having to pull back, for example, scaling back fills?

Bill: "Make It All Ok" was a difficult one. It went through a few different arrangements and keys, and lots of takes. I remember that on the CD take, I was fairly frustrated and slamming away, albeit slowly and with restraint. A few earlier takes might have had better drum stuff, but the finished take was best overall.

"I Wanted To Be Wrong" was recorded live with guitar, bass, vocals, and tambourine. The drums in the bridge were an overdub. I love that track. It's the sound of musicians really listening. I have no problem whatsoever playing very simply. I often *prefer* it. And if it's good for the track, how or why can anyone complain? For some time now, my playing and approach to drumming has been in the "simplify, simplify, simplify" area.

MD: When faced with doing multiple retakes of a song, have you ever just had to say, "Y'know, that's the best I can do"?

Bill: That has happened before. I can't remember what [session] it was for, but it was a 6/8 feel and for some reason I just wasn't getting it. It was played to a sequenced thing and I was feeling it a little differently than the computer was, and for some reason I just couldn't relax into it. I just said, "Look, when do you want to stop, [laughs] because this is the best I can do. I'm really sorry to say this, but I don't think I can play this any better." It's kind of a terrible thing to admit, but it's kind of a practical thing to admit. Not to toot my own horn, but I think that's a good quality in a musician—to be able to say, "I can't do this."

MD: This leads to the next question, and a hotly debated topic: How do you feel about the widespread use of computer-based recording programs like Pro Tools? While they can be of great help, they also seem to have reduced the need for drummers to be able to actually nail a complete take.

Bill: I'm sure you've heard the one about the Pro Tools engineer calling to a band after a take: "That was really awful, guys.... C'mon in!" The performance question affects not only drummers. That different performances can be easily assembled without an editing block, razors, and tape I have no problem with. That someone needs to spend a week moving around drum and guitar waveforms because someone can't play is another thing.

What concerns me more is something I've referred to as the "universal feel," a euphemism for that ubiquitous, metronomic no-feel that seems to infect a majority of contemporary popular recordings. I have no beef with Pro Tools and digital recording in general. It's allowed me to have a 64-track recording studio in my home. Ultimately, as always, it's down to the quality of ideas within the operator.

MD: You've done a good amount of producing but also a lot of sessions over the years. How do you approach a session on which you've been hired only to drum?

Bill: If I'm hired as a drummer I sometimes have to remind myself why I'm there. My aim is to do what is asked of me. Sometimes what is asked of me is to do anything I want. Being open to input is essential. I'm not paid to force my point of view on a recording.

MD: Your recent work with R.E.M., The Minus Five, Ken Stringfellow, and others has shown the world another side of your playing. But was there ever a time previous to this when you felt like you were in danger of becoming known as "Bill Rieflin, industrial drummer"?

Bill: If those were the kinds of records I made during a certain period, it's not unreasonable that some would think of me as that guy. There are those who still think of me as an "industrial drummer," whatever that means. If anything, I find it a bit embarrassing. Dealing with the expectations of others is always a problem. When those expectations are trapped somewhere in history it's even worse.

MD: Can you think of one specific record that you've played on that you feel is most representative of "the Bill Rieflin sound"?

Bill: No, although I do have favorite records that I've played on. Chris Connelly's *Shipwreck* is a good record. One of the best tracks I've ever played is on a [former Screaming Trees vocalist] Mark Lanegan record called *Field Songs*. There weren't any vocals on it, and it took like an hour to do it. The track already existed, so I was just playing drums on top. I listened to the record months later, when it came out. The one song I played on was the first song on the record, but I didn't remember it because we just went through it in an hour. All I could think to myself was, "Whoever played on this song, Mark should have gotten to play on the whole record, because this guy is really great." [laughs] Then at the end of the song I went, "Wait a minute, that's me!" I was really shocked, pleasantly surprised, and extremely *hopeful* that I had found something that I played on that I really liked. I don't know about other people when they hear themselves play, but I *hate* my playing. [laughs] I know that sounds funny.

MD: Not liking one's playing seems to be a complaint of a lot of great musicians.

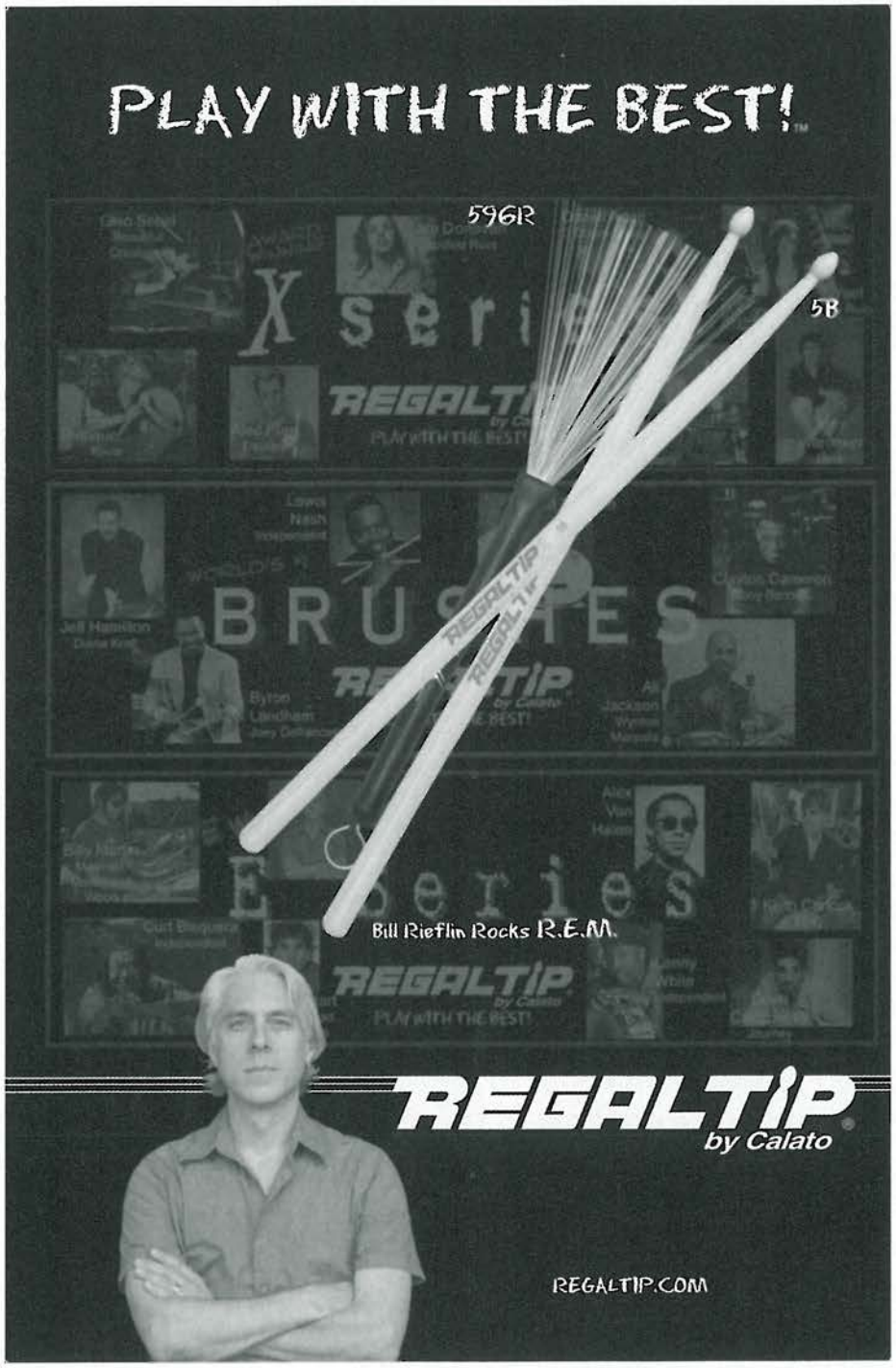
Bill: I went to an Elvin Jones workshop once and someone asked him if he ever listened to his own records. And his response was, "Only if I want to hear all the mistakes or if I want to hear bad playing." Right, I only listen to *A Love Supreme* when I want to hear crappy playing. [laughs]

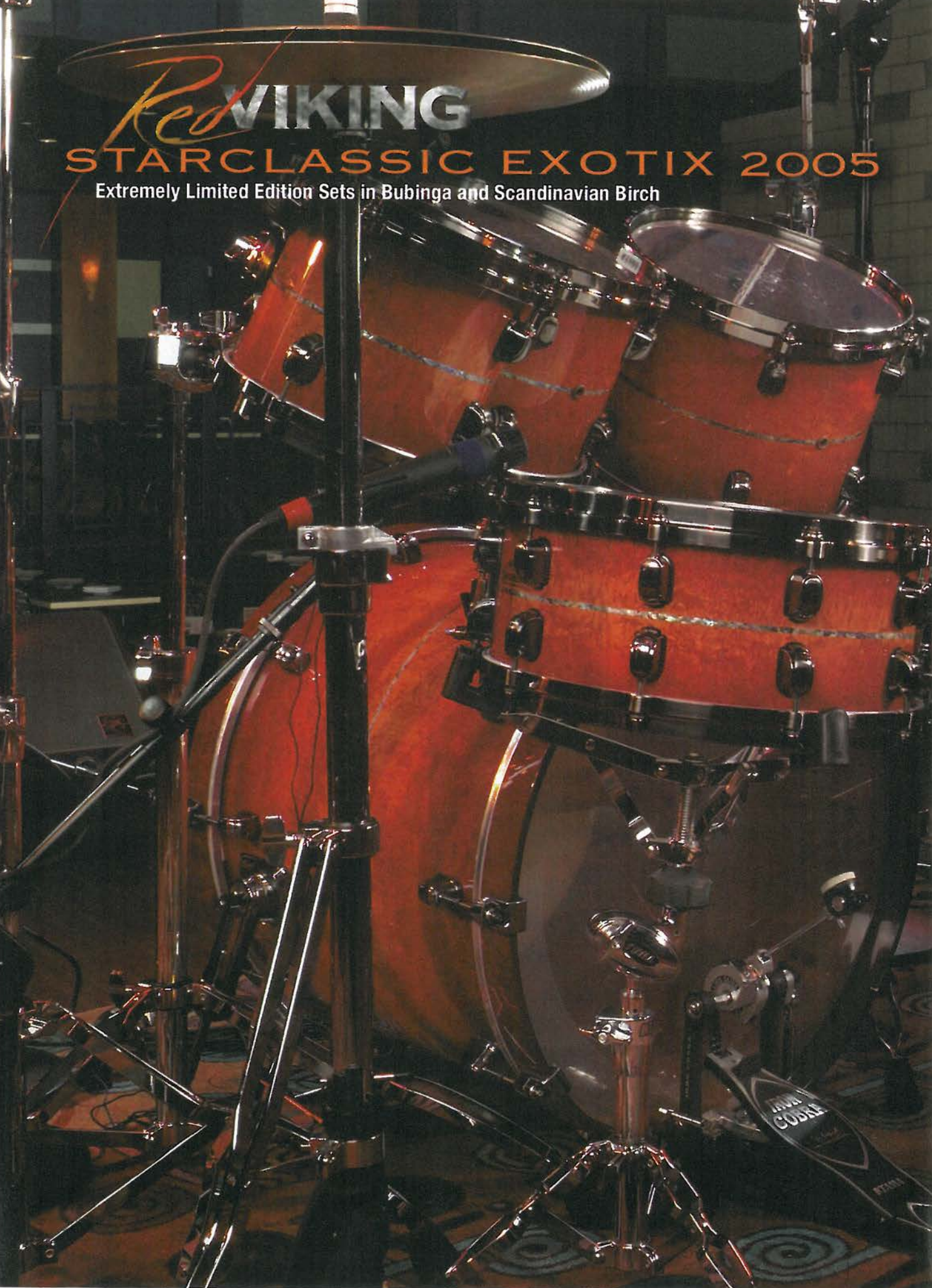
MD: You're just too close to it, I guess.

Bill: Maybe it's reverse egotism or egotism turned on its ear. We're all egotistical bastards. [laughs]

MD: Earlier you mentioned giving advice to your younger self. Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give to a young drummer just starting out today?

Bill: It's music. Listen. Then, find an instructor who will guide you through the fundamental principals necessary to becoming an excellent musician and player. Have fun. Wear earplugs.

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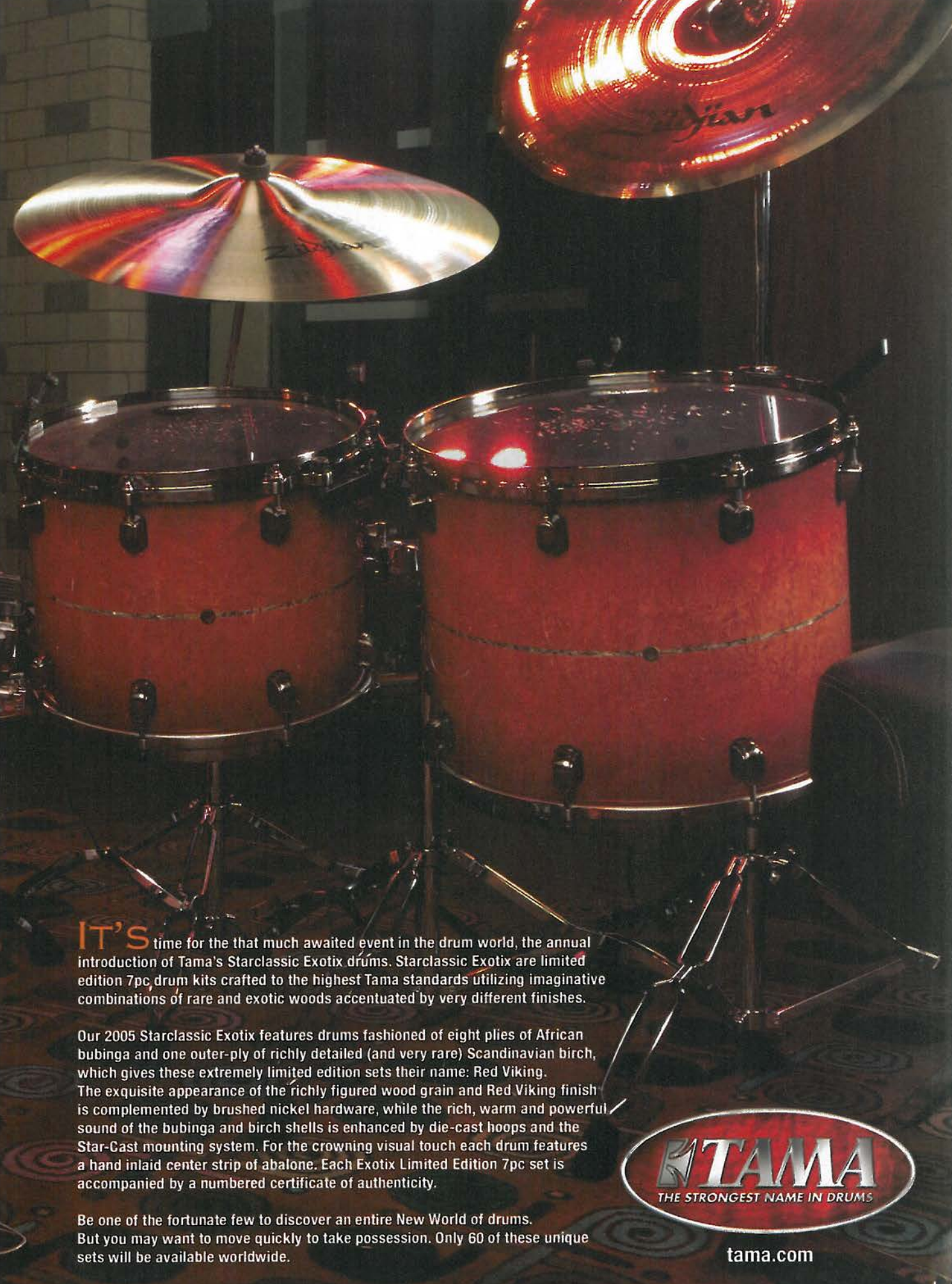

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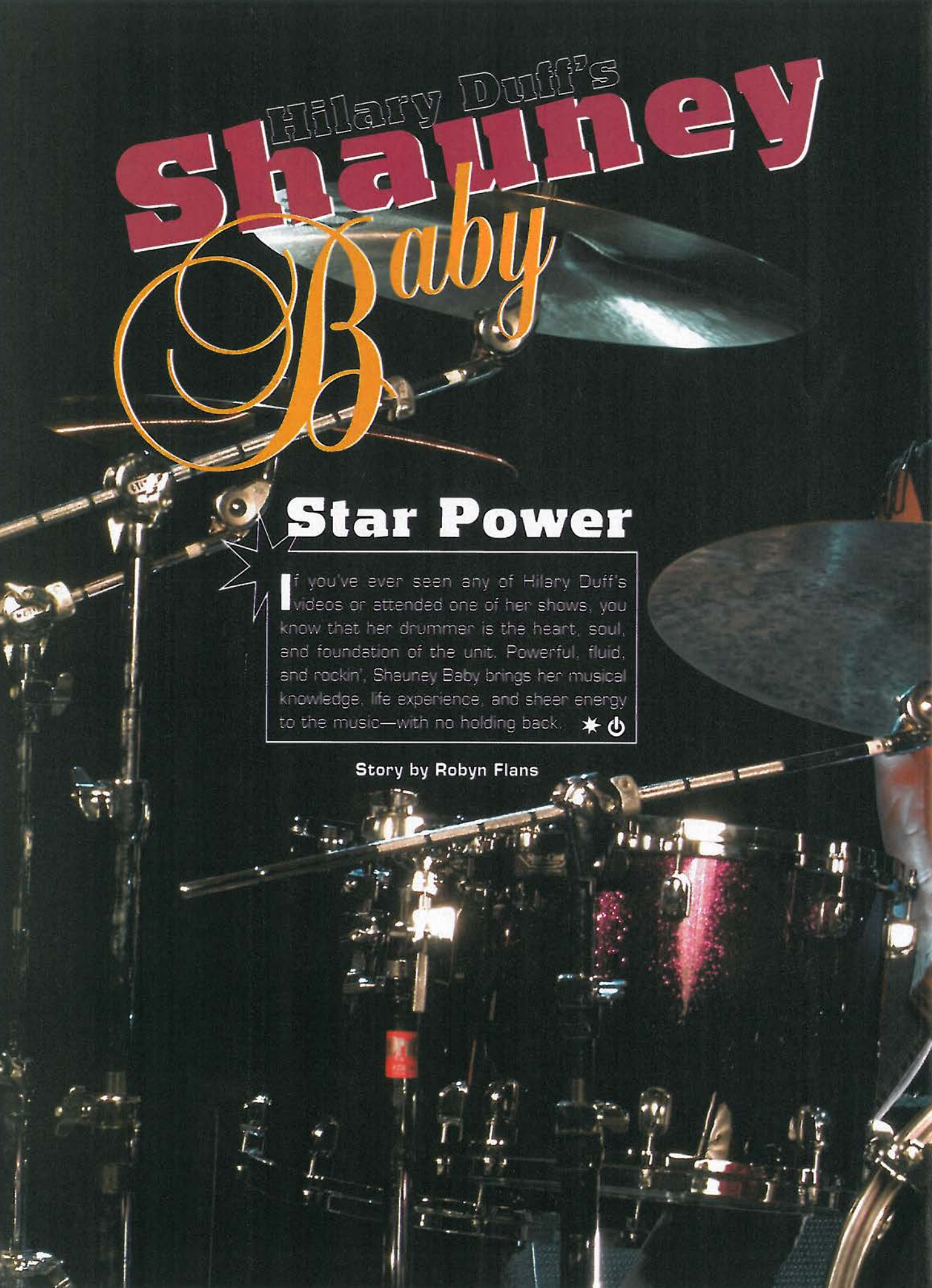

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Story by Robyn Flans

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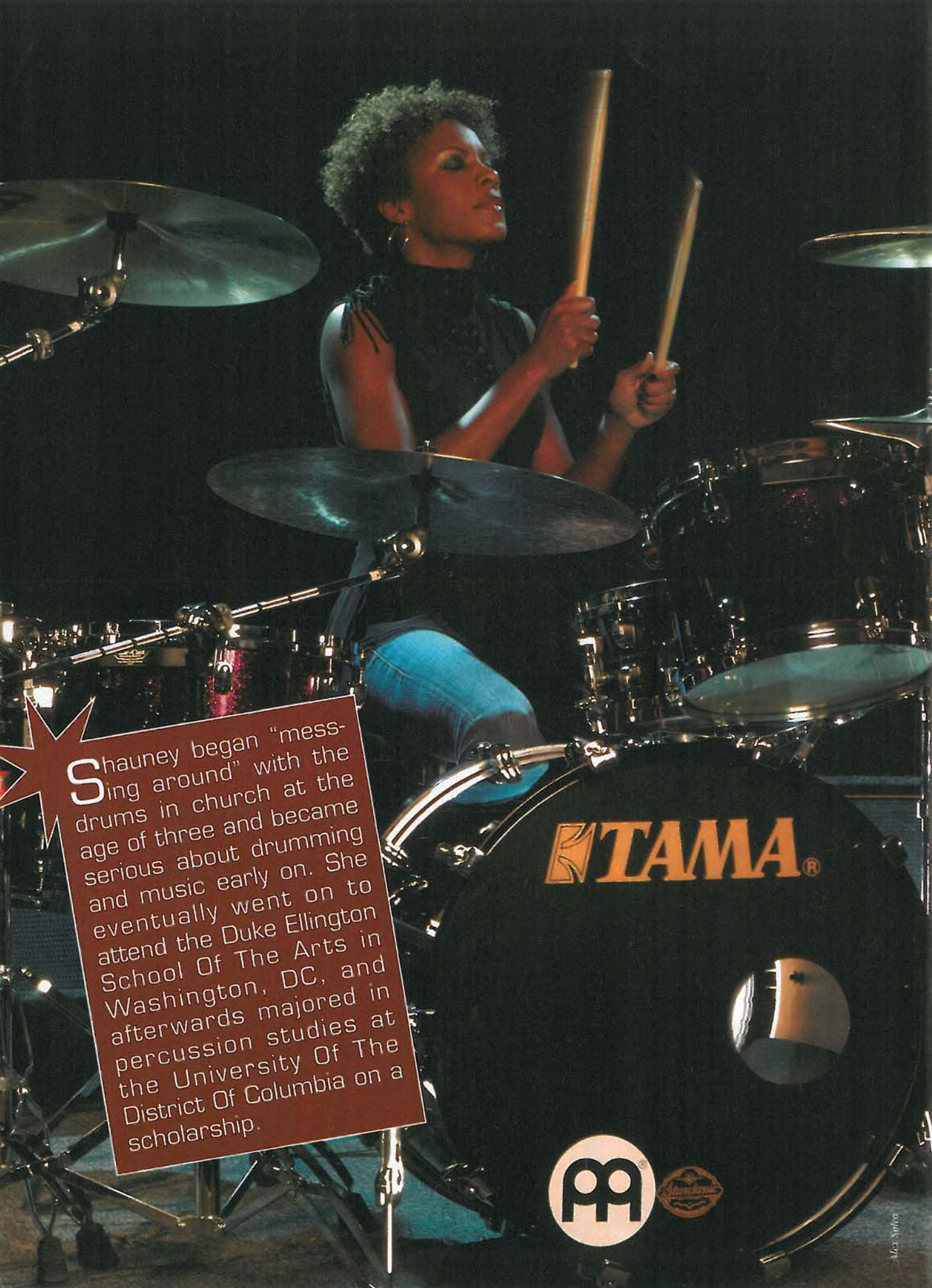

Shauney began "messing around" with the drums in church at the age of three and became serious about drumming and music early on. She eventually went on to attend the Duke Ellington School Of The Arts in Washington, DC, and afterwards majored in percussion studies at the University Of The District Of Columbia on a scholarship.

Shauney's pro career seemed to take off almost immediately. While still in college, she joined a female go-go band called Pleasure. That group would eventually be hired to back Salt 'N Pepa.

After moving to LA in 1995, Shauney became the drummer in the house band for Fox TV's *The Keenan Ivory Wayans Show*. She then continued to work with a wide variety of artists, even appearing in the video for Sting's "After The Rain Has Fallen" single (off of *Brand New Day*). About a year and a half ago, she landed the gig with supernova-hot pop star Hilary Duff, recording some of the tracks for Duff's latest smash, *Metamorphosis*. The drummer is currently enjoying touring the world with the multi-platinum artist.

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MD: I'd like to find out about your training. Did you have lessons outside of high school?

Shauney: As a child, I got to hear a lot of great drummers at our church. Watching those drummers and listening to Gospel records really inspired me early on. I also played along to records a lot. My mother had records with Dennis Chambers and Kenny Aronoff playing on them, so I would practice trying to play exactly what they did.

I definitely improved quite a bit in high school at the Duke Ellington School Of The Arts. I think versus going to a regular high school, a school of the arts gives you so many opportunities. I learned how to read and how to play the piano, which I feel really helped my drumming. More importantly, I learned discipline. There was a great vibe at the school. Plus they had rooms where we could go and practice all day long if we wanted.

MD: Does reading and all of those things you learned come into play in your current gig?

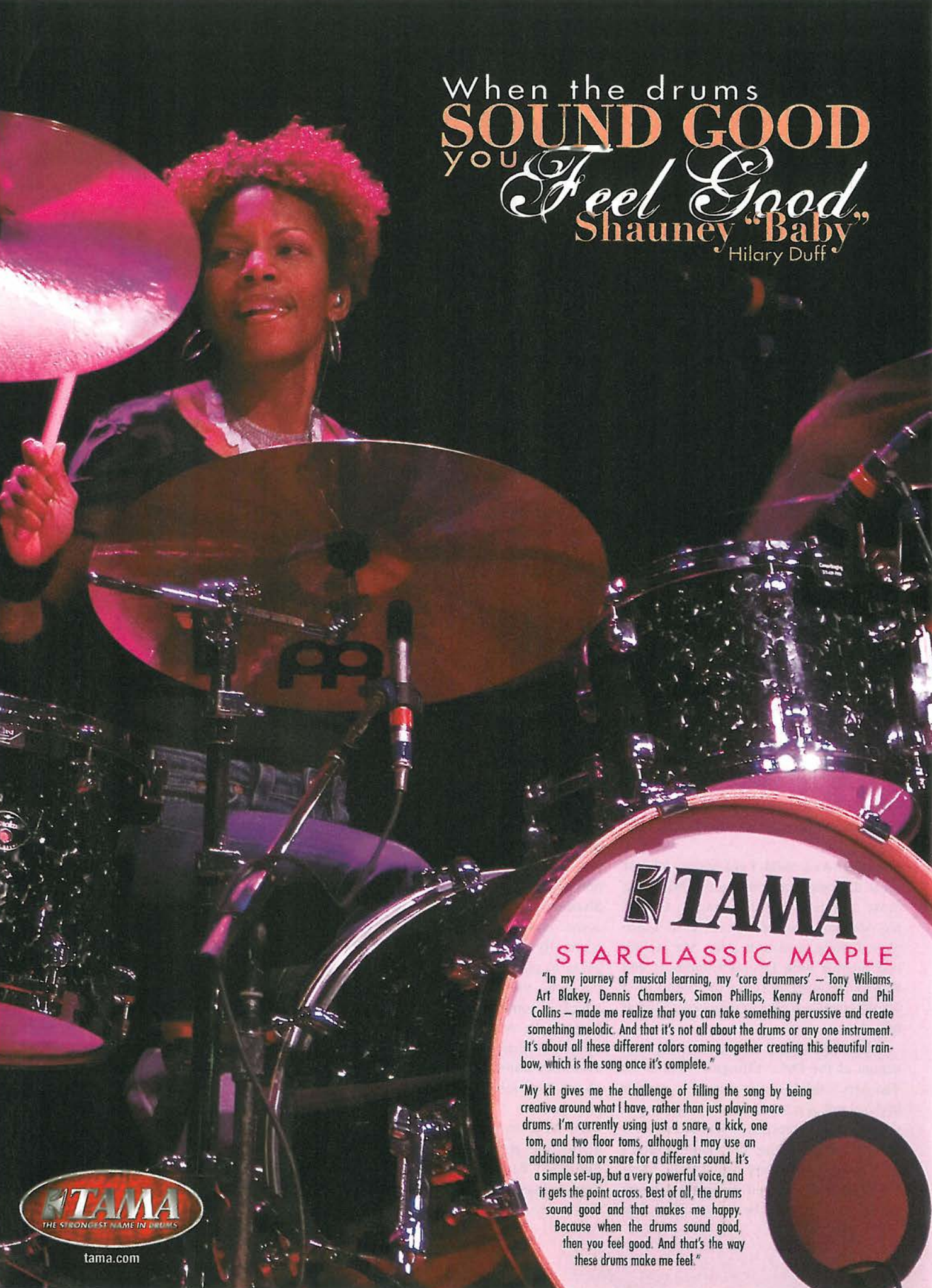
Shauney: I think *everything* I've learned comes into play at one point or another, especially working with Hilary. If you're going to play on the record and you hear the song, you may want to chart it out, which is something I've done. You also learn to be professional and to take it seriously. Just because you're a good drummer doesn't mean you can be lax about your job. You always have to be prepared.

MD: What do you think prepared you for getting this gig?

Shauney: Persistence, perseverance, and preparedness. It's always been challenging for me, and I've had to keep after it. Sometimes I've been very frustrated or even wanted to give up, because of things like not being accepted because I'm a chick drummer or because I look a certain way. You have to be strong and believe in yourself to make it in this business.

As far as how my playing developed, I was really challenged at the Duke Ellington School Of The Arts. I didn't even realize it, though, because all I wanted to do was play drums and improve. I love the drums. There were different ensembles to play in and private instruction with the percussion instructor, which was fantastic.

That said, there were other drum students—guys in the class—who didn't want me to get on the drumset or who would actually push me off the drum seat. I didn't understand it. At the time, I thought they were just being selfish. But I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"In my journey of musical learning, my 'core drummers' – Tony Williams, Art Blakey, Dennis Chambers, Simon Phillips, Kenny Aronoff and Phil Collins – made me realize that you can take something percussive and create something melodic. And that it's not all about the drums or any one instrument. It's about all these different colors coming together creating this beautiful rainbow, which is the song once it's complete."
"My kit gives me the challenge of filling the song by being creative around what I have, rather than just playing more drums. I'm currently using just a snare, a kick, one tom, and two floor toms, although I may use an additional tom or snare for a different sound. It's a simple set-up, but a very powerful voice, and it gets the point across. Best of all, the drums sound good and that makes me happy. Because when the drums sound good, then you feel good. And that's the way these drums make me feel."
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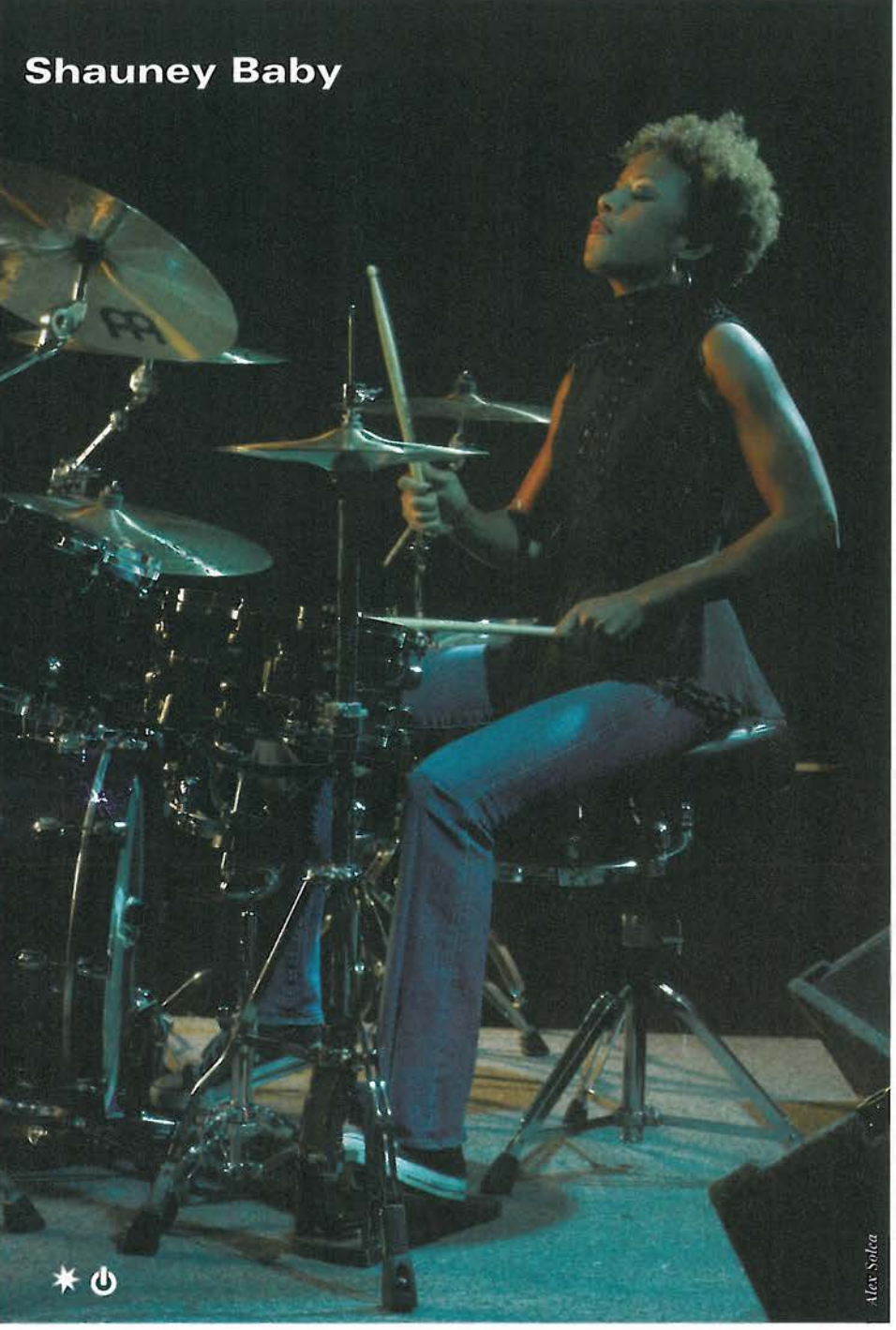

Alex Solca

guess, looking back, that prepared me for having a career as a drummer, because it's always like that. Guys are always challenging women drummers—and we never think we're worthy anyway. But if you don't look like what their perception of a drummer is, then somehow you're not a drummer. And that's wrong.

All of our experiences, even outside of music, contribute to what we bring to music—our emotions, our feelings, and what's inside of us. You can take several people who play the same song the same way, but it's still going to be different. That's because it's about everything we've experienced, all of the life lessons we've learned. That's what helps us give what we give. It wasn't just the School Of The Arts that made me the musician I am. It was home, church, school, and family. You express all of that when you're performing.

MD: Were your parents supportive?

Shauney: My mom was very supportive, even though I would practice in the house and I knew it was hard for her sometimes. She allowed me to do what I had to do, and as I got better, she told me it was pleasing to her ears.

MD: Were your parents musical?

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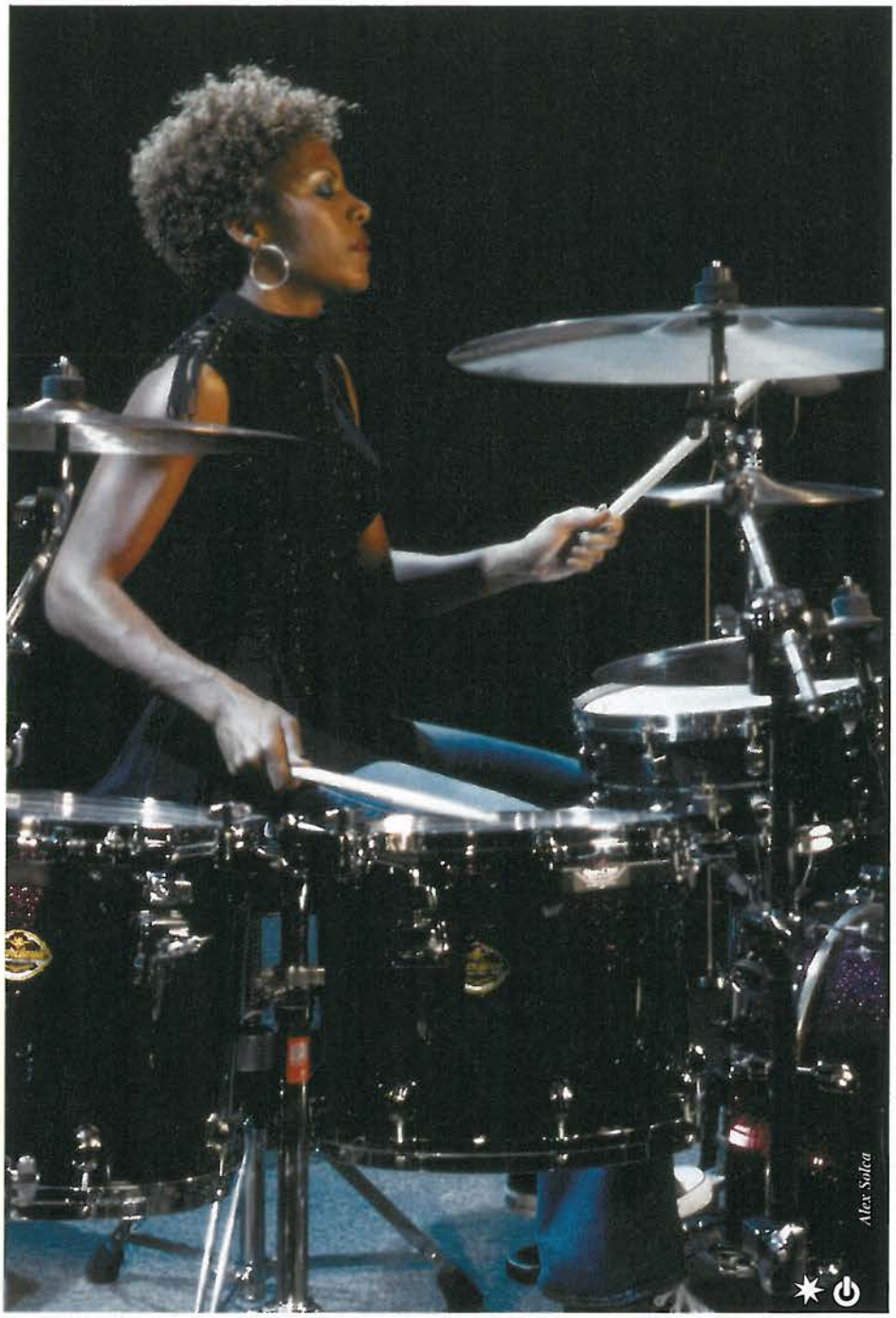
Shauney Baby

Shauney: My mom used to sing, and my father used to sing too. He was a founding member of the R&B group The Delfonics. But my dad died when I was seven. My whole family was really supportive, though, including my grandfather. I remember when I'd call my mom and say, "Mom, these guys are being mean." She'd say, "That's okay, Baby. Just keep doing what you're doing. They're just jealous."

MD: At what point did you find out that girls were not really accepted on drums?

Shauney: I didn't understand it in high school. And I didn't realize how bad it was until I began trying to work professionally. When I was working with Salt 'N Pepa in New York, guys would meet me and say, "You're the *drummer*? You don't look like a drummer." And I was going, "What's a drummer supposed to look like?" No one could ever answer that, but they would always say it.

I think it really hit me when I moved to California. It's really hard out here, just wanting to be accepted as a musician



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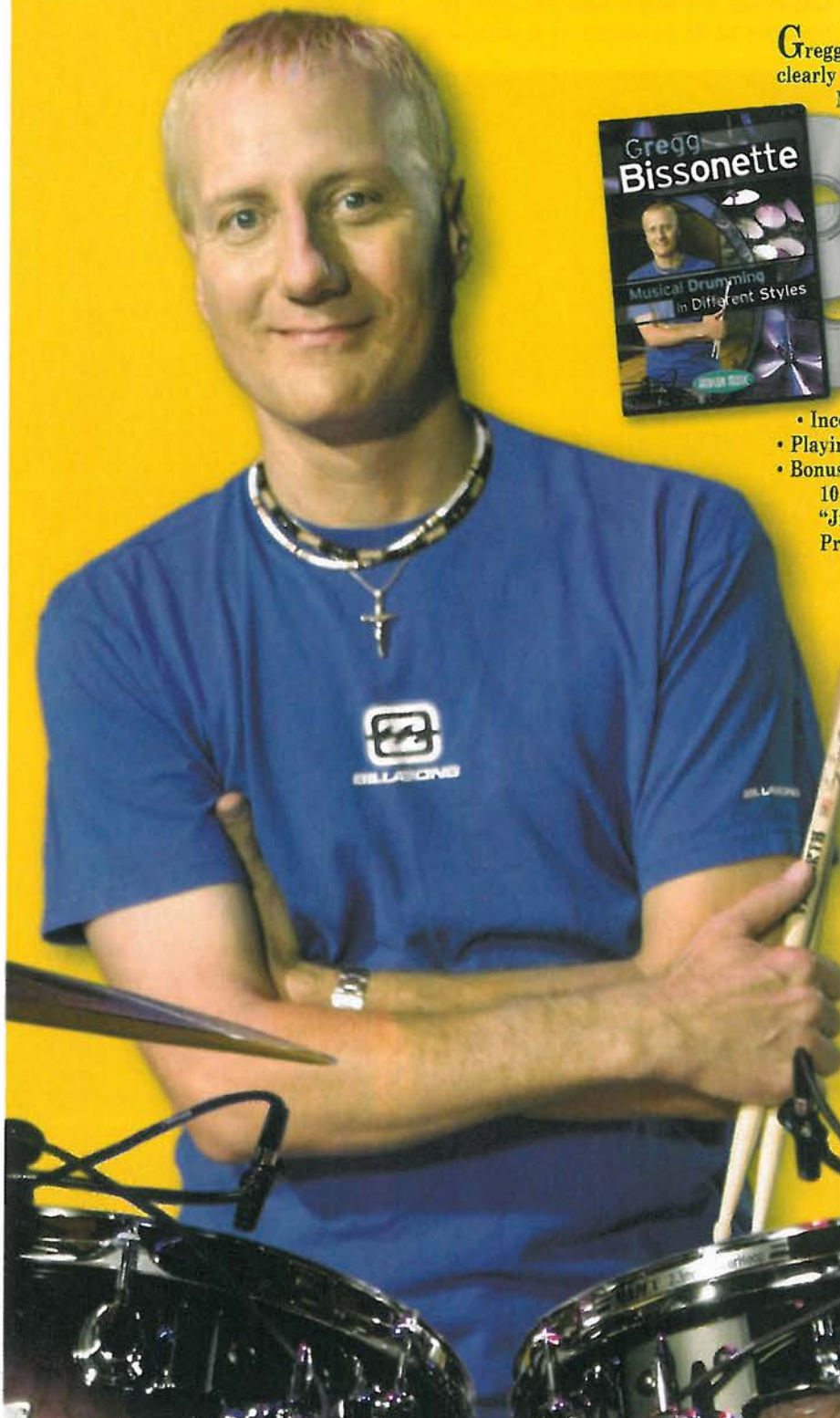

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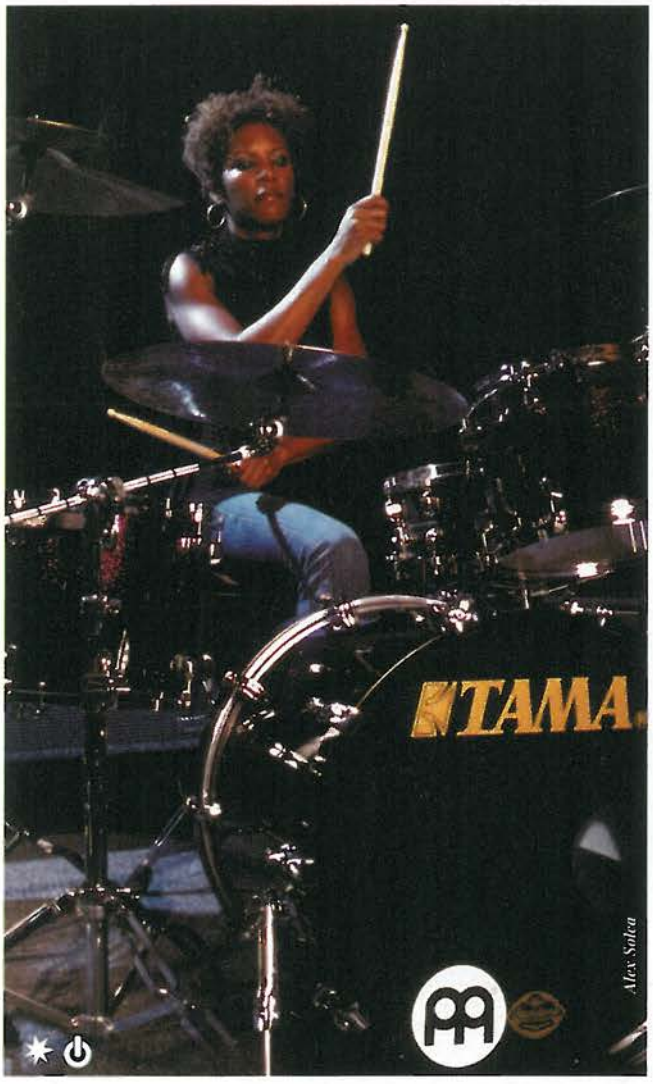
without having to compromise who I am as a lady. That was a big lesson.

MD: When does that stop?

Shauney: I don't know if it ever will. I think you just have to stop caring about how other people see you or what people think you should look like to be a drummer. You just have to get to the point of saying to yourself, This is what I want to do and I am so passionate about it that it doesn't matter what other people think. So when I get a job playing drums, I do my job well. That's all that matters.



MD: Were there drummers who inspired you growing up?

Shauney: First it was Tony Williams and Art Blakey, because I came to know them through Wallace Roney, the great jazz trumpeter, who I met while attending the Duke Ellington School Of The Arts. He's my mentor. I was totally blown away by Tony and Art. I remember asking Art if he could teach me how to play like he did and he said, "You'll just have to watch me." He was so mesmerizing.

Then there was Dennis Chambers, whose style was something I could identify with, coming from a past of funk and jazz. He was probably my biggest influence. On the rock side, I really dug Kenny Aronoff. And I recently saw Sting at the Hollywood Bowl, and his drummer, Keith Carlock, was amazing, as was the drummer with Annie Lennox, Steve Barney. He had a small setup, but he got the most out of it.

People try to give you the impression that you have to have a big kit to be able to play. But I like to blow people away with just a kick, snare, and a hi-hat. That's what I tell kids: Start off with only a few pieces, because nothing else matters. You have to groove and keep the time. You should do that first.

MD: What happened after high school?

Shauney: I got a scholarship to the University Of The District Of Columbia, which had a very serious jazz program. I was so into jazz. I then was in an all-girl go-go band called Pleasure, and we became very popular in DC. We were the first all-female band to play a large arena in the area.

MD: Could you talk about playing go-go music?

Shauney: Go-go is very drum and percussion driven. To play it correctly, you have drumset along with one percussionist who plays congas and bongos and another who plays cowbell. And there's a person who raps on the mic'. The drum-

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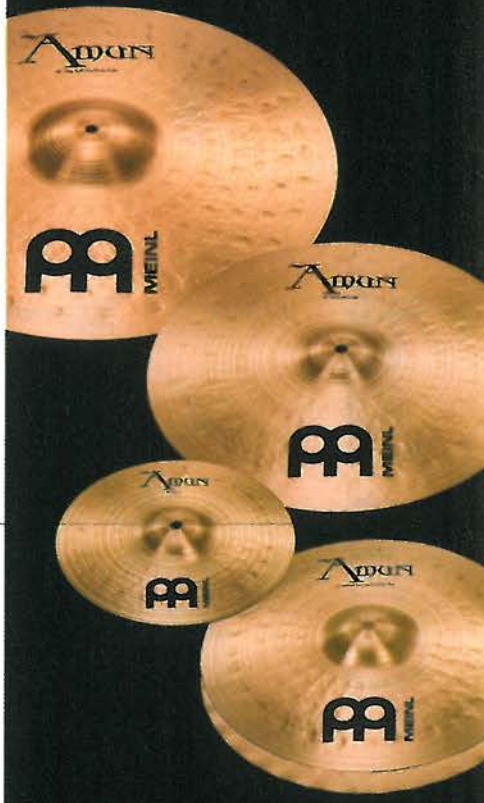

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mer plays a basic 2 and 4 groove, but it has a certain feel, just like funk or any music has a certain feel. Go-go has a sort of anticipated rhythm. With the 2 and 4 on the drums, the congas playing upbeat accents, and the cowbell playing a syncopated part, the overall effect is a rhythm that is mesmerizing.

MD: Where did you learn how to play that kind of music?

Shauney: It was really interesting, because when we put the band together and rehearsed for our shows, the founder of the band would have me listen to tapes and I would play this 2 and 4 beat. But it wasn't the same as the go-go feel, which had a certain anticipation to it. She told me to keep listening and I'd get it. You have to understand the music before you can play it. You have to *feel* it. Eventually I played with the tape and got it. When I got it, I felt it, and it made all the difference.

MD: Then you joined Salt 'N Pepa. How did that come about?

> "Guys are always challenging women drummers. If you don't look like what their perception of a drummer is, then somehow you're not a drummer. And that's wrong."

Shauney: The gig came about through the popularity of Pleasure. We had been doing arenas opening for a lot of rap artists, and Salt 'N Pepa's producer and manager, Herbie Luv Bug, just fell in love with the band and the whole concept of us backing up the girls. I think it took a year for it all to happen. I actually played percussion with Salt 'N Pepa at first because they wanted to finish the tour with the drummer they had.

MD: What did that gig require?

Shauney: It required us to play the music as it was on the CD and have fun doing it. It wasn't difficult learning the parts, because I was so into them anyway. The experience was so cool. We toured with LL Cool J, Queen Latifah, and all these people I admired, and it was great meeting them. It was amazing.

MD: What did *The Keenan Ivory Wayans Show* require of you?

Shauney: We had to write music for the show, which I did, and we also had to be able to learn music quickly for the purpose of supporting visiting artists who were performing on the show. We rehearsed every day and had to learn songs sometimes in minutes for some of the artists who were appearing.

We also had to take care of ourselves physically and be prepared for anything, which sometimes included appearing in the skits. It was amazing to meet all the people you've seen in movies. It was the beginning of a whole new world for me.

The Wayans family was so great—they're funny and talented people and serious about what they're doing, but they know how to have fun. It was really different, because television is about image and I had to wear heels, so I asked them to at least give me boots with heels, which would offer a little more support while playing. I remember having to tell Keenan that he needed to talk to the stylist because the pants they wanted me to

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Larry Crane, Tape-Op Magazine

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Deanne Franklin, FOH - Tom Waits

"With the i-5 on my snare drum, there's just no going back. I've just started using it on guitar with very good results there too. The i-5; it's my new little weapon."
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Ed Tree, Studio Engineer - The Spencer Davis Group

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John Gatski, Pro Audio Review

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Shauney Baby

perform in were too tight!

MD: And how did the gig with Hilary come about?

Shauney: Hilary and I have the same manager.

MD: You have a manager?

Shauney: Before having a manager, I found it really challenging being a female and a drummer. There are so many people who say things they don't mean, and sometimes people say things when you're a young lady because they have other intentions. So instead of dealing with sexual harassment and all the other comments that were coming at me, I thought, I'd like to get a manager so I can bypass this and just get the call about auditioning or working.

> *"Just because you're a good drummer doesn't mean you can be lax about your job. You always have to be prepared."*

The musicians union helped me to track down a list of management companies. So Hilary's manager was the same as mine and he asked me if I'd like to be in her first video, "So Yesterday." When they started to put the band together, the opportunity was presented to me. Her parents had met me and they wanted me to do it and it seemed right. So I took the job. That was over a year ago.

MD: So here you are, a girl who came up being into jazz, and who is now playing what some would call "pop with an edge."

Shauney: I think that what we play is rock, and I think I fit in because I love rock 'n' roll. And I love any opportunity to play it, and I'm going to take it to the max. That said, I approach each job as it comes, regardless of what style of music it is. You get a job, and if you like it, you choose to do it and you embrace the music. I love Hilary's music, I love her songs, I like the producers, and I embrace the music.

MD: What goes into making her music rock from a drumming standpoint?

Shauney: Hilary's music needs—and I think that I give it this—an edge. I think that I bring intensity, energy, and a certain drive. And I think it's my job to set that tone for the band.

MD: From the time you joined, what occurred?

Shauney: We filmed "So Yesterday," and then a couple of months later we started rehearsing. Then we started doing shows, which involved playing clubs. But every show was selling out and there were lines around the block, so we had to go from clubs to arenas quickly. It's been amazing. Hilary's been so successful, which I think the band contributes to.

I remember the response during the first tour to my drumming with Hilary was so amazing. It brought tears to my eyes. I've heard young boys say, "Girls can play drums? You're amazing." And little girls have said, "I'm inspired. I want to play drums." And even the parents have been inspired, so it's been incredible. And all of this is inspiring *me*.

After this experience, I feel I'm so strong—it doesn't matter what other people say. I want to do what I do well and for as long as I can, and in the process inspire, encourage, and motivate young people. Hopefully in the next couple of generations, little boys growing up into teenagers and young men won't have the same attitudes towards women that some of us have experienced. I think it's going to be different.

MD: When the gigs moved from clubs to arenas, what changed as far as your approach or needs?

Shauney: I just did what I did in the clubs because I was still dealing with in-ear monitors. Sometimes in arenas, when it's really crowded, you hear things differently, even though we have in-ears. Every arena is different.

I had one experience in an arena where it was *very* weird. The crowd noise was

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so loud that what I heard in my in-ears was overpowering. You can't expect everything to be the same every day, so you have to go in with the attitude that you're going to make it the best that you can.

MD: I understand that you got to record tracks for Hilary's latest CD, *Metamorphosis*.

Shauney: I'm on "Mr. James Dean," "Jericho," and "The Last Song." I was thrilled that I got to record some of the tracks for her album. There are amazing drummers on it too, like Kenny Aronoff. To be in that company for me is like, wow!

MD: The studio experience is obviously very different from live shows.

Shauney: It depends on the producer and how they do things. There's definitely pressure. But I just went in there, got the click in my ear, listened to the track, and played.

MD: Where did you learn how to play with a click?

Shauney: I've been practicing with a metronome since I was in high school. Drummers have to do it. At first, I was playing gigs without a click. But when you get to a certain professional level, just about everything involves playing to a click.

MD: Which songs do you like playing live with Hilary?

Shauney: I love playing "That Girl Can Rock" because it's so powerful and has such great energy. I also like playing "So Yesterday," because it's happy. I also love playing "Come Clean" and "Party Up." I like playing the ballads, too, because there are so many high-energy songs that when we play the ballads, I get a little break.

MD: Do you still practice?

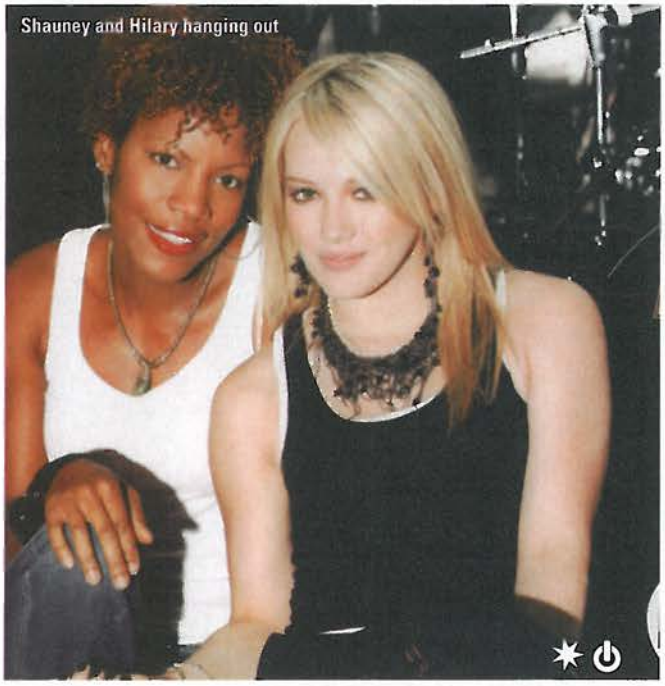
Shauney: Yes. I practice whenever I can. It's so important, even when you're on tour and playing every day. Performing live is practicing in a sense, but you need to work on other elements. When I'm touring, I work on my rudiments. Even if you can only do it for half an hour, it helps. When I'm not touring, I practice every day.

MD: Do you warm up before gigs?

Shauney: Yes. I play through the rudiments to get my hands moving.

MD: How long is the set?

Shauney: It's about an hour and fifteen minutes. But on this last tour, I was also playing for Hilary's older sister Haley, who was the opening act. Her music is very different. She's definitely more edgy than her sister. I plan on playing with both of them for as long as I can.


Shauney and Hilary hanging out

MD: With all of the touring you've been doing, is there time for a life?

Shauney: I have a wonderful boyfriend who is amazingly supportive. He travels a lot for his business and it works out. He's my best friend. When you have friendship and people who are understanding, it's so awesome. I'm so happy—I'm happy with my boyfriend, with my career, *and* with my mental state. I don't let other people affect me with their judgments.

MD Radio Listen to Shauney Baby and Hilary Duff on MD Radio at www.moderndrummer.com.

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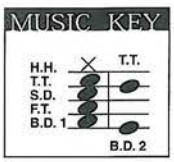
Double Bass Beats

Part 5: Non-Continuous Foot Patterns With Displaced Snare

by Rod Morgenstein



In this article we're going to continue displacing the snare with non-continuous bass drum patterns. Last month we displaced 8th notes on the snare. But now we're going to add displaced 16th notes on the "a" of the beat, as, for example, on 1 e & A.

The grooves in examples 1–10 are in 4/4, while examples 11–16 are in 3/4, 5/4, or 6/4. Example 16 orchestrates some of the snare notes in Example 15 by applying them to the toms. A relatively simple process such as this can yield *very* interesting and exciting results.

Syncopating the snare requires a fair amount of dexterity, before you even talk about adding non-continuous double bass patterns to the mix. Start slowly and make sure all of the notes receive equal emphasis. The tempo will also determine whether the ride pattern consists of 8th notes or quarter notes.

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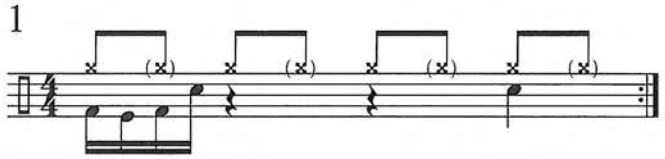

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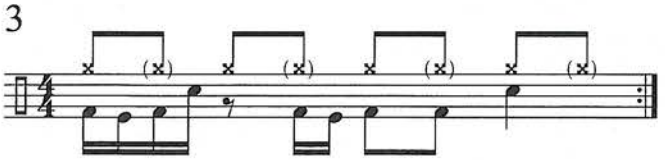

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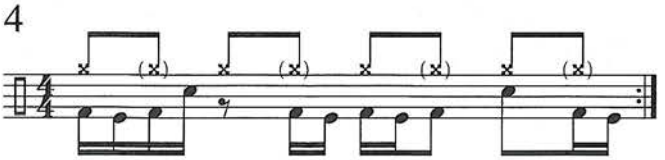

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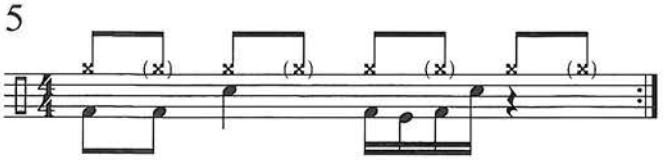

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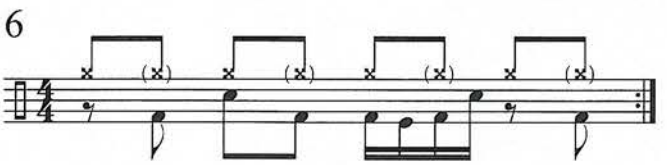

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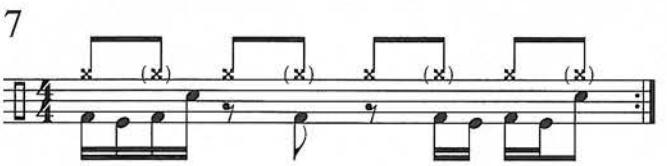

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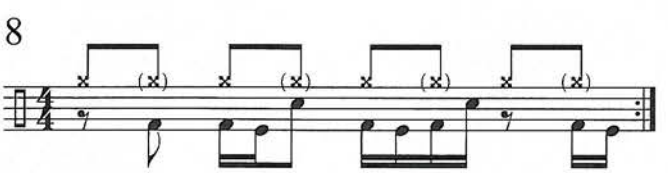

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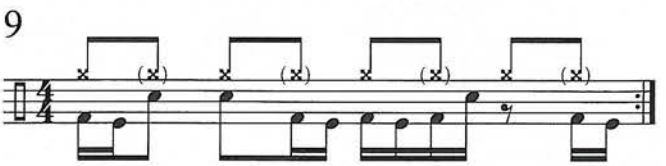

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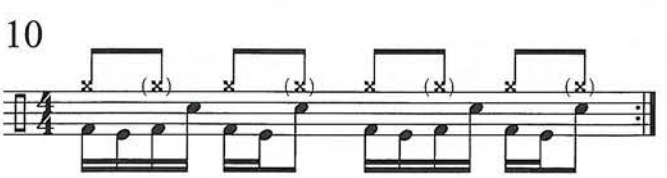

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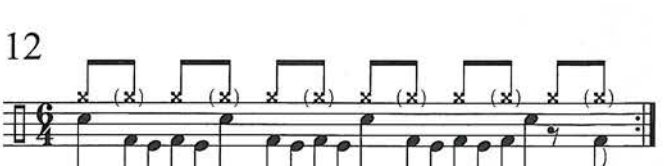

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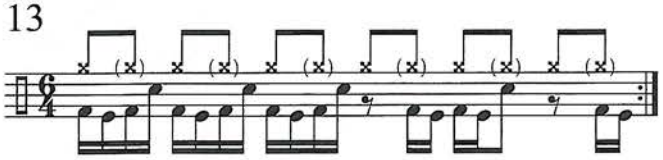

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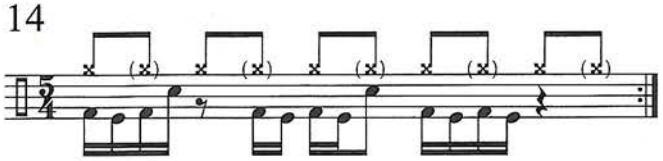

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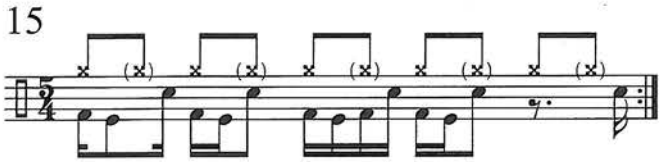

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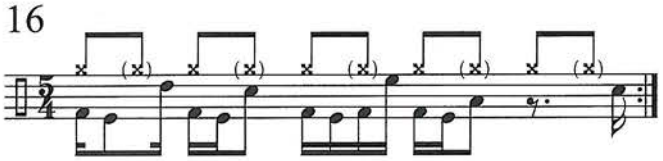

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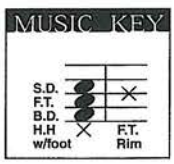
More Brazilian Coordination Studies

by Maria Martinez



For many non-Brazilians, musical styles such as samba, bossa nova, and baiao are commonly played on the drumset. However, most samba rhythms are derived from the Brazilian Escola de Samba, where the parts are played by a variety of percussion instruments. To play samba with an authentic feel on the kit, it's important to become familiar with the original batucada percussion-only style.

Although you may see sambas written in 2/4 or 4/4, the correct time signature, notation, and *feel* is in 2/2, or cut time. At the heart of that "two" pulse is the surdo, a large drum found in the Escola de Samba's bateria (percussion) section. When played on the drumset, the surdo part is played with a stick or mallet on the floor tom. The muted "surdo" sound (+) can be achieved by pressing the stick into the head of the floor tom. The open sound (o) is simulated with a normal stroke on the unmuffled floor tom.

To better understand the correct feel and space between the bass drum strokes while playing a samba, simulate a typical surdo rhythm on the floor tom with this step-by-step approach:

1) Lay the palm and fingers of your left hand on the floor tom head.

2) Play the first note with the right stick on the head of the floor tom. This will produce a muted sound, as indicated below by the (+) symbol.

3) Play upbeats with your right hand on the rim of the floor tom. Alternate the strokes in a back-and-forth motion (head, rim, head, rim, etc.) as shown here:

1

4) While keeping your left palm down on the head of the floor tom, tap the fingers of your left hand in the following pattern.

2

5) Lift your left hand so that the right-hand stroke (with the stick or mallet) on beat 2 produces an open tone, as indicated by the (o) symbol. With this pulse added, the surdo part is complete.

3

When you're comfortable playing the surdo part, add the bass drum, matching the *feel* of the muted and open tones on the floor tom. (For the authentic feel, beat 2 should be accented, but not exaggerated.) Now add the hi-hat with your left foot to match the rimclicks. This creates the ostinato that is the foundation of this type of samba.

Now that your feet are playing the surdo ostinato, you can simplify the pattern by removing the left hand from the pattern. (Be sure to press the stick into the head for the muted note on beat 1 with the right hand.) Here's the complete ostinato with the left foot on the hi-hat, right foot on the bass drum, and right hand on the floor tom.

4

Begin by practicing this ostinato alone, always keeping the feeling of 2/2 in mind and body. Listen carefully as you play. There should be no "flamming" between any of the parts.

This ostinato works well in a wide range of tempos, from slow (half note = 80 bpm) to fast (half note = 120 bpm). When you're comfortable playing it at a variety of tempos, try combining it with the following two-bar phrase, played with the left hand on the snare drum (as either a normal stroke or cross-stick).

5

To see how this phrase lines up with the ostinato, here are the parts written together.

6

Now try combining the ostinato with the following two-bar phrases, which are typical of the Brazilian drumming style.

7

8

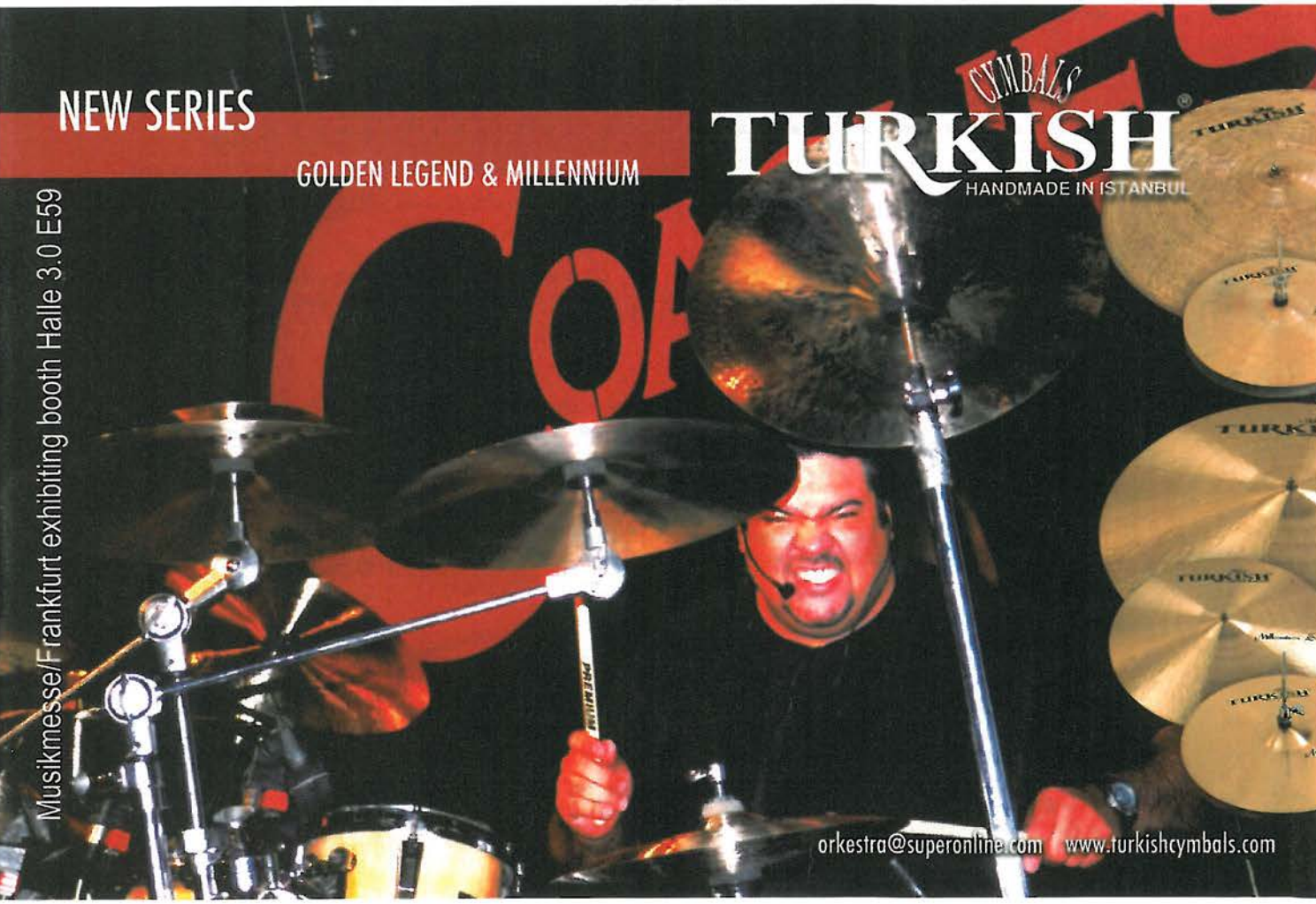
9

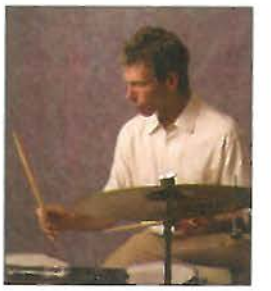
10

Becoming comfortable with these two-bar rhythmic phrases will help you develop the coordination necessary to improvise freely on the snare drum while maintaining the ostinato with your other limbs. One way to develop the ability to improvise is to play each phrase as written and then "answer" it with a phrase of your own.

Listening to Brazilian music is extremely important, in terms of developing the authentic feel and coming up with improvisational ideas. Good examples include music by Martinho De Vila, Caetano Veloso, Gal Costa, Chico Buarque, Beth Carvalho, Gilberto Gil, Jorge Ben, and Elis Regina. Listen especially to the interaction of the drums, percussion, bass, piano, vocals, etc. Being aware of how the instruments work together helps you acquire a different perspective on the overall feel of the music.

Maria Martinez's career includes work with such artists as Barry White, Angela Bofill, El Chicano, and Rita Coolidge, among others. She is also the author of several books and videos, all published by Hal Leonard (www.halleonard.com).





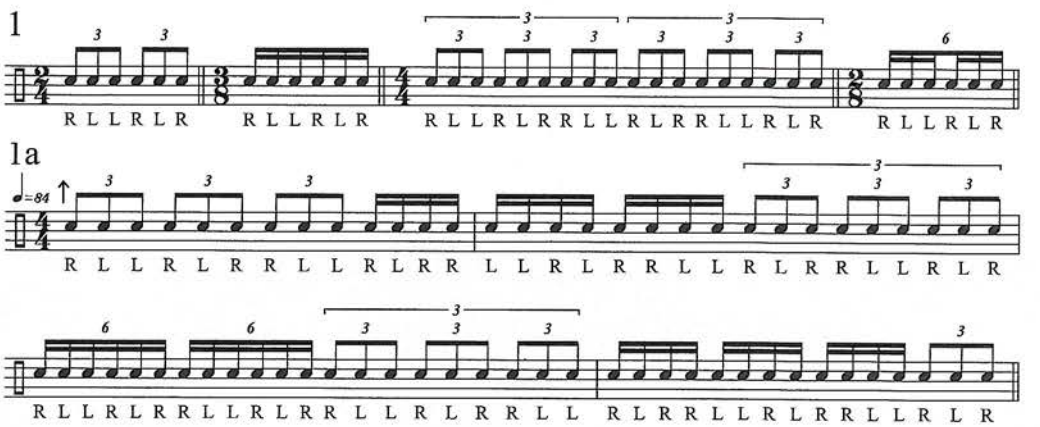
The Pyramid

Challenging Your Hands, Mind, And Ears

by John Riley

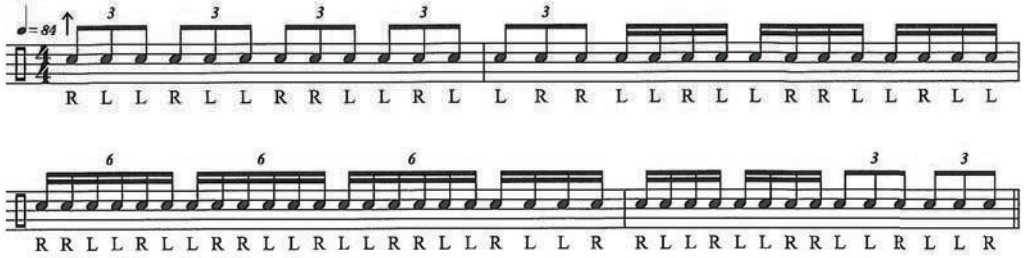
New ideas often challenge us on different levels—the technical, conceptual, and sonic. For some years I've been exploring the concepts of implied time and metric modulation. The phrases that follow have grown out of that exploration and will challenge your hands, mind, and ears. They employ sticking patterns of five, six, and seven notes, organized to imply the jazz ride cymbal pattern played at various rates of speed.

Our foundation rhythm is the six-note triplet pattern played RLLRLR. Example 1 shows this sticking at four different rates of speed. Then it sequences the patterns to create a four-measure phrase (Example 1a). This gives the impression of speeding up and slowing down. Play each pattern on a pad or snare drum. Once it begins to flow, play it on two different sound sources.



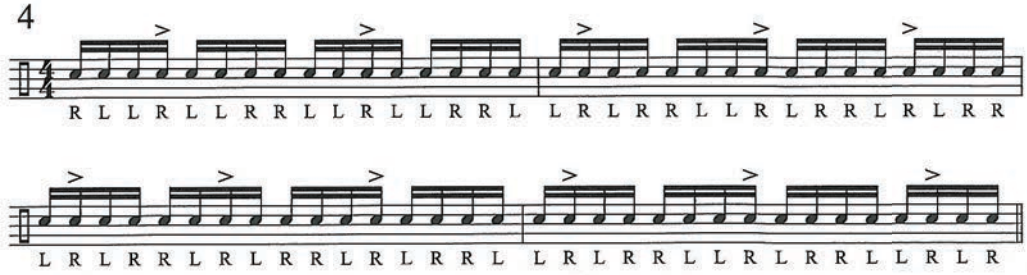
Examples 2 and 3 go through the same kind of process with five- and seven-note sticking patterns.

3a



Practice Example 4 to get comfortable shifting between the five-, six-, and seven-note sticking patterns at the 16th-note rate. I've added accents to suggest the "2 and 4" of the ride pattern. Once it flows, try it on two different sound sources.

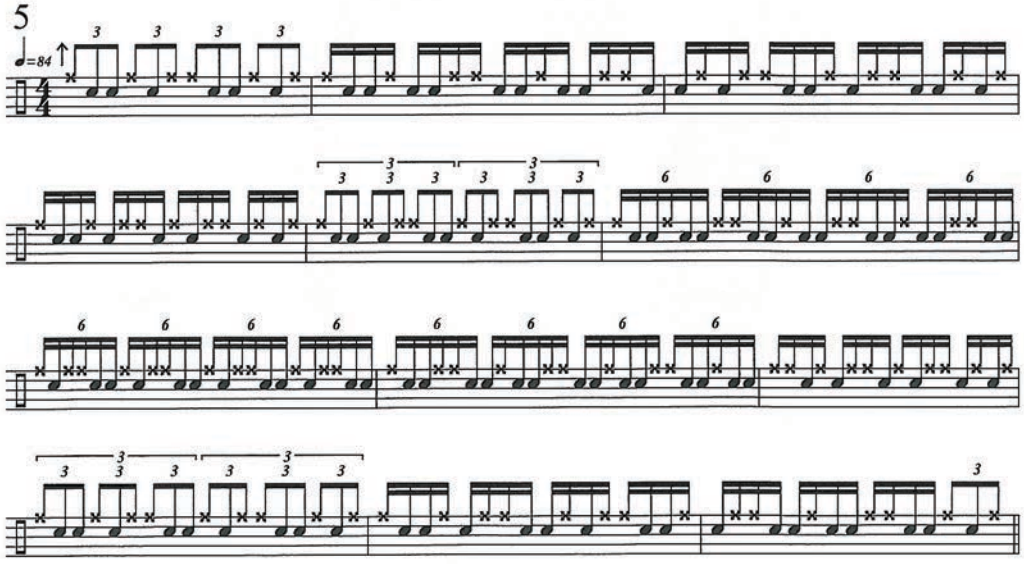
4



The final example is a pyramid where, over the course of twelve measures, we link the various sticking patterns together to create the illusion of a very gradual acceleration until, in the seventh bar, the original tempo is doubled. Then a very gradual deceleration begins that leads back to the original time feel. While each separate time-shifting phrase might already be familiar, the seamless sequencing of them and finding the exact points to shift from one to another is crucial.

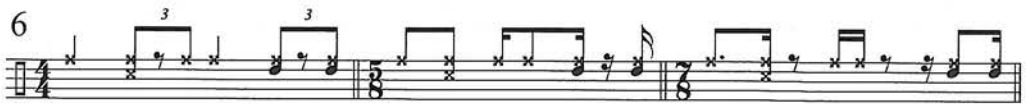
I've written the pyramid out with the hands split between the ride cymbal and snare drum, but first play through it on one surface. Set your metronome to quarter note = 60, and tap your foot with the click.

5



Now go back and play the pyramid as written on your ride cymbal and snare drum. Use a metronome, and play quarter notes along with it on your bass drum, and 2 and 4 on the hi-hat, to help stabilize your pulse. Once you're comfortable with that, play the snare drum part on your leg so that you really hear the cymbal beat accelerating and decelerating.

Finally, play the "bongo beat" with your left hand. Here's how it fits with each of the sticking patterns.



Best of luck with this material, and feel free to use these concepts to explore fresh fill and solo ideas as well.

John Riley's career has included work with such artists as John Scofield, Mike Stern, Woody Herman, and Stan Getz. His new book, The Jazz Drummer's Workshop, *has just been released by Modern Drummer Publications.*

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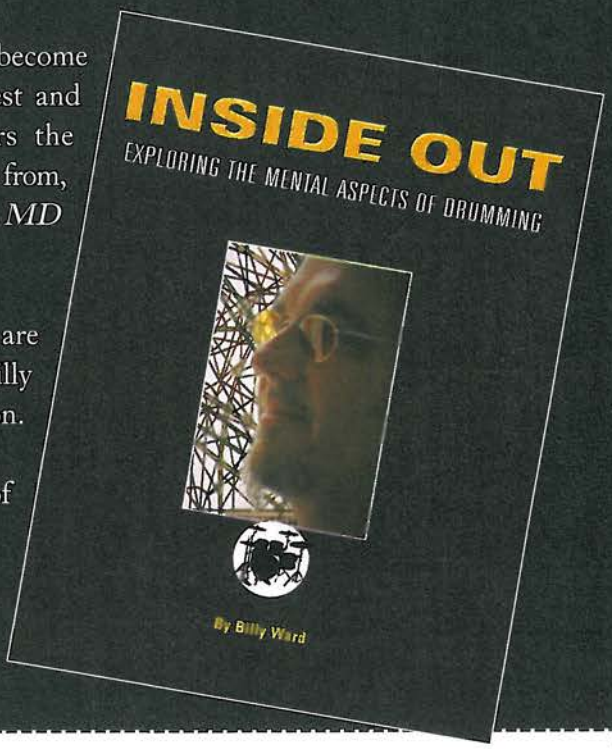

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Sight-Reading For The Show Drummer

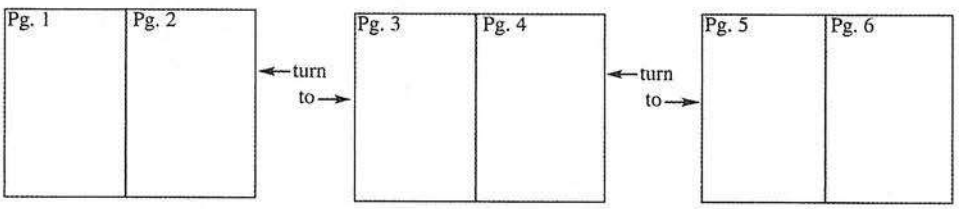
by Ed Shaughnessy and Clem DeRosa

Sight-reading at 100% accuracy is the number-one prerequisite for show drumming. Since shows necessitate many changes of tempo, time signature, and musical styles, the drummer must learn to apply these elements when seeing the music for the first time. Unlike other areas of music, there is not enough time for many repeated rehearsals of each show piece—thus the need for excellent sight-reading.

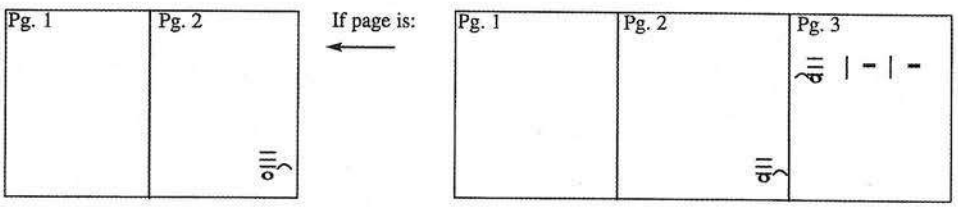
Before you begin your first read-through, make sure the sheet music is properly folded and the music stand is in the best position.

Folding The Music

Since the drummer often keeps playing at page turns, it's very important that a quick one-handed page turn shows at least the next two pages of music. This is accomplished by an accordion-like folding.



There are situations in which you'll depart from the two-page system. If you're using both hands at the time of a two-page turn, you must adjust to a single-page setup or a three-part section fold to eliminate the page turn while both hands are busy.

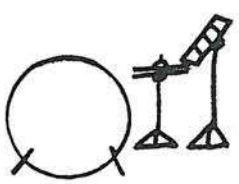


Music Stand Placement

Seeing the conductor is crucial when playing shows, but so is seeing your sheet music. Try the music stand positions recommended below.

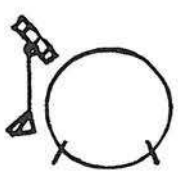
Position A

Place the music stand over your hi-hats. This works best for left-handed page turns, and if the conductor is straight ahead or to your left.



Position B

Place the music stand over the far edge of the floor tom. This is used if the conductor is to your right. Right-handed page turns are necessary, so be ready to "fake" the rhythm with your left hand.



Now that the sheet music is prepared, consider the following as you begin the sight-reading process.

Don't Get Lost

This is the cardinal rule for reading music. It's always important, but even more so in show music. You must constantly be looking ahead for tempo changes and be prepared to lock in the new tempo. Also, once you start the page, *don't stop!* When you're playing the show, you won't have the luxury of stopping. This is the way you must practice. It means accepting a limited number of mistakes to gain the benefit of reading the whole page.

Long And Short Sounds

Show drummers often have only a horn chart to work from. It's up to you to interpret this music in an accurate and efficient manner. By marking up the chart with specific symbols, you'll know where long and short notes and accents occur in the music. Long sounds are marked with a tenuto marking (a "—" above the note), while short notes are marked with a marcato accent (a "^" above the note).

The melodic line determines the horns' decision to play long or short notes. The drummer must interpret the part without this advantage, and make two decisions:

1. What notes in the figure will be long or short?
2. What pieces of the kit will best reinforce the horns and fit the texture of the music?

Long And Short In Jazz, Rock, And Latin

When playing figures in these styles, it is important to match the accents to the length of the figure. Short sounds including the following are played on the snare drum.

Long sounds, including all tied notes, are played using a cymbal and supported with the bass drum to give the figure a more legato sound.

Figures that look like this on the page:

are played like this:

Interpretation of the written part, determining long and short sounds, will vary in different styles of music. With experience, you'll learn to make the choices that best fit the musical texture of the moment.

Sight-Reading Material

Saxophone, trumpet, and trombone parts are an excellent source of sight-reading material. The chart on the following page is a typical horn part that can be interpreted in any style. The long (—) and short (^) notes are indicated. Also marked are the melodic lines that should be *tacit* ("not played"), because you don't want to interfere with the flow of the melody. During these figures (and the extended rests at letters B and C), just play time.

Practicing Sight-Reading

1. Mark long and short sounds before you start.
2. Play two or four measures of time (on the ride cymbal or hi-hats) before playing the exercise.
3. Practice at various tempos.
4. At each practice session, start with different combinations of rehearsal letters for new sight-reading experiences. For example, play A-B-C, then C-A-B, then B-D-A, etc.
5. Create your own combinations of the written exercise, so you don't memorize the rhythms.
6. Use a variety of instruments on your set—snare, toms, cymbal/snare, etc.—to match the texture and color of the music.
7. Play the whole page with some ride cymbal or hi-hat time between each rehearsal letter.
8. Remember the cardinal rules: "Don't stop," and "Keep the tempo locked in!"

Article excerpted from Show Drumming *by Ed Shaughnessy and Clem DeRosa (Hal Leonard). Used by permission.*

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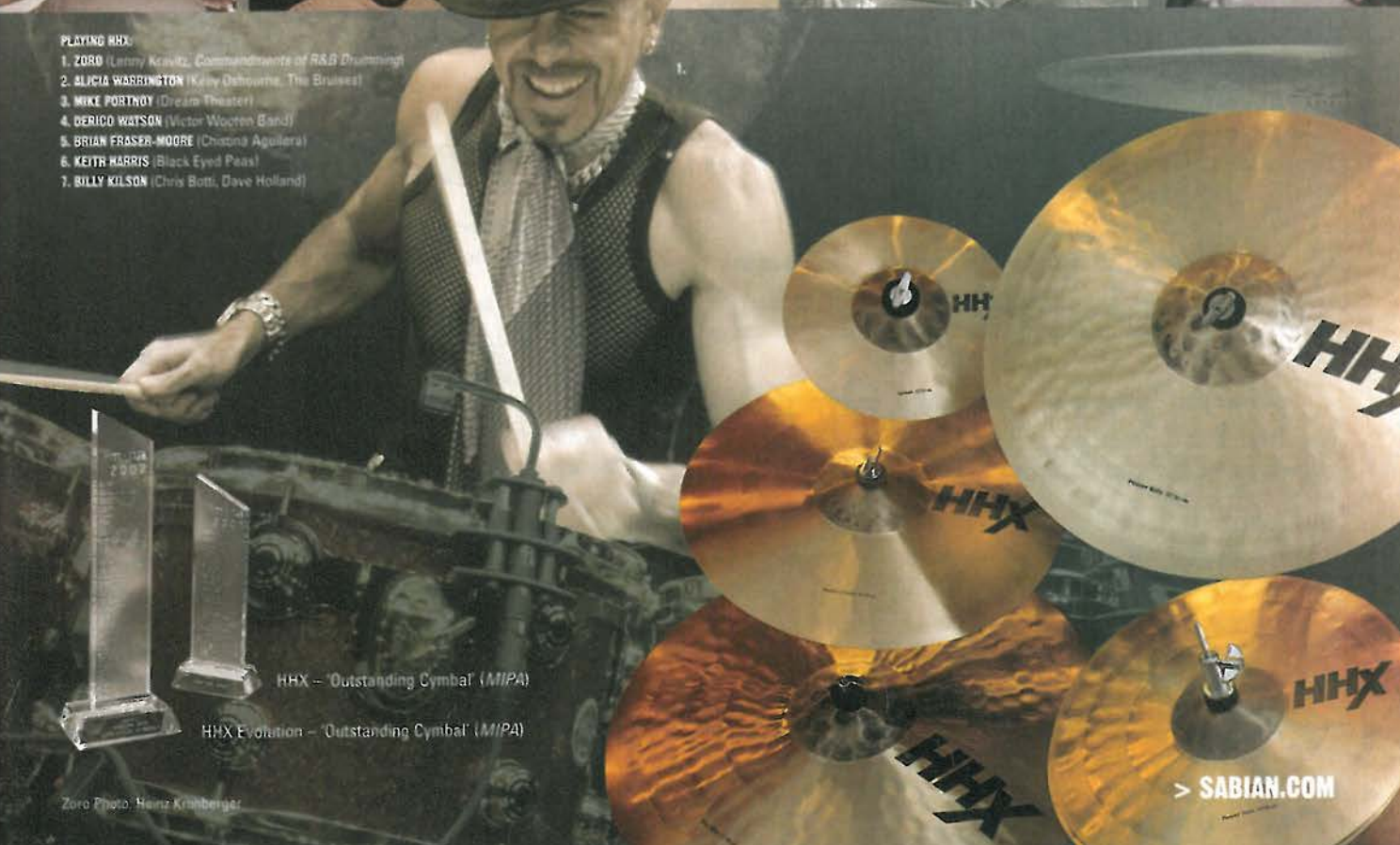

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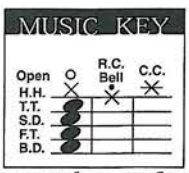
The Used's *Branden Steineckert*

In Love And Death

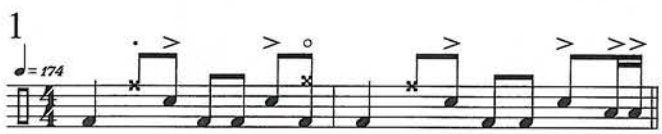
by Ed Breckenfeld



The highly awaited new album from The Used is soaring on the strength of the hit single "Take It Away." This Utah quartet deftly combines the elements of modern alt-rock/punk/metal with their own melodic sensibilities. Branden Steineckert's drumming is energetic and powerful throughout the disc while never upstaging the band's message. Let's examine a few of his grooves.

"Take It Away"

Branden's interesting use of the ride cymbal, open hi-hat, and floor tom adds great movement to the verse of this single. (0:45)

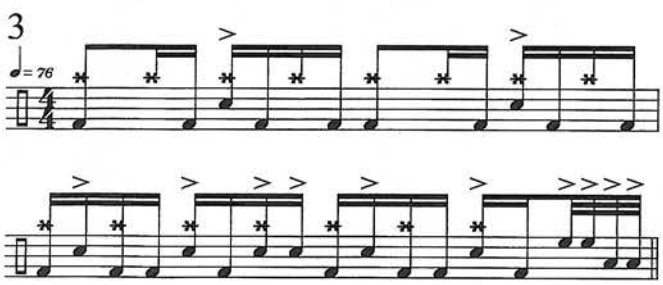


"I Caught Fire"

This verse beat is tailored to Jeph Howard's syncopated bass guitar line. (0:19)

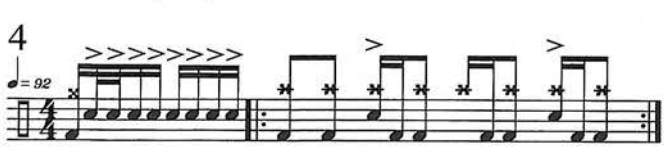
"Let It Bleed"

As the chorus of this driving tune shifts to a half-time feel, Steineckert's beat balances the space in the first measure with a paradiddle kick/snare pattern in the second. (0:45)



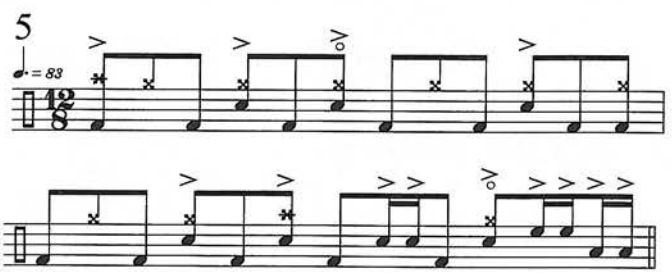
"Listening"

Here's a guitar riff–inspired chorus groove, with a nice lead-in snare drum fill. (0:36)



"Light With A Sharpened Edge"

One of the coolest grooves on the album is Branden's unusual take on 12/8 time. The off-beat hi-hat pattern is the key here. (0:06)



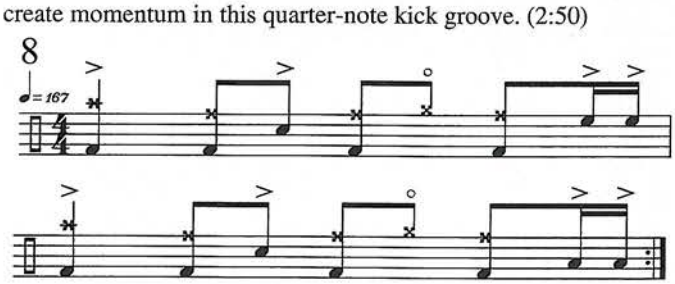
"Sound Effects And Over Dramatics"

This 3/4 pattern is reminiscent of Jon Theodore's work with The Mars Volta. (See the *Off The Record* on Theodore in the January 2004 issue of *MD*). (0:10)

Later in the same track, Branden slides back into another great 3/4 beat via this showy 16th-note fill. (0:32)

"I'm A Fake"

Check out the effective use of snare drum, hi-hat, and toms to create momentum in this quarter-note kick groove. (2:50)



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A Paragon Is Born

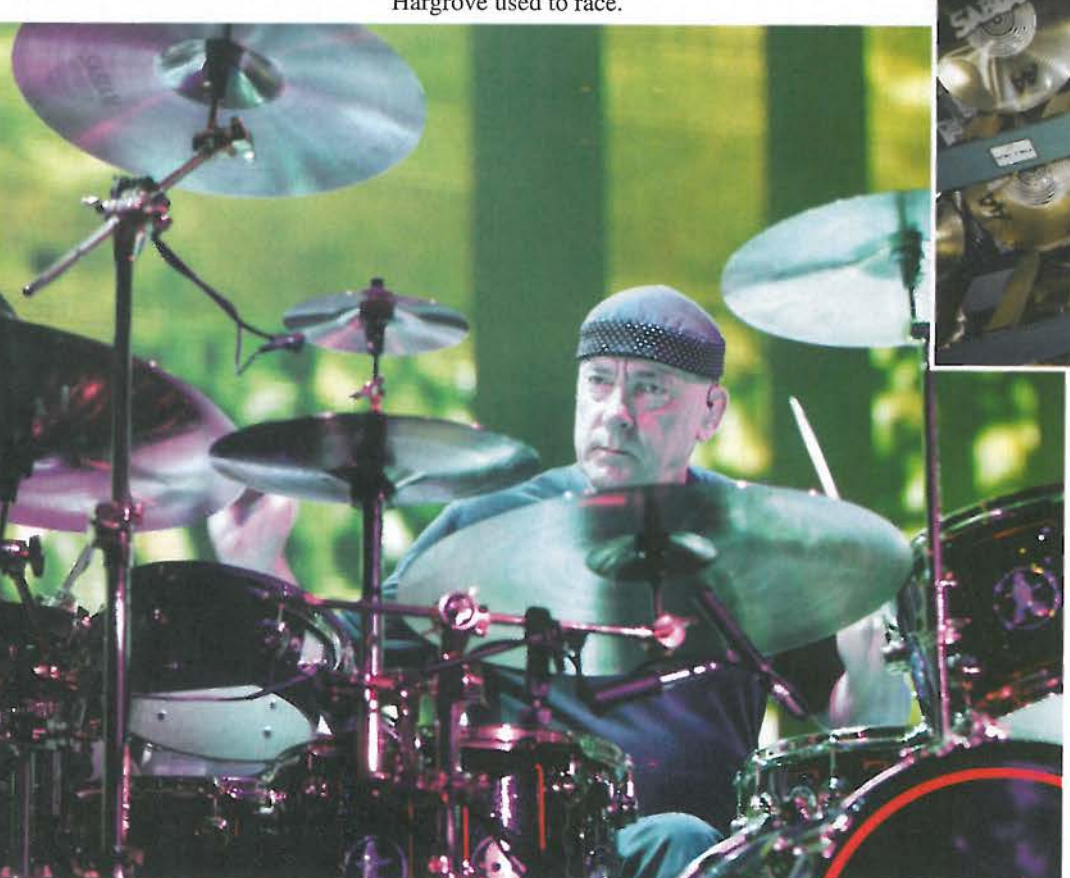
Master Drummer Meets Master Cymbalsmith

by T. Bruce Wittet

It's been two years since Neil Peart, iconic drummer with the Canadian rock trio Rush, boarded a flight from Los Angeles to Montreal and started a journey that is the stuff of urban legend. Upon arriving in Canada, Neil dusted off his motorcycle and headed south. His destination was the Sabian cymbal factory in the province of New Brunswick. His goal was to design a new set of cymbals to replace his aging collection.

On a good day, the trip from Quebec can take eight hours. Unfortunately, Neil wasn't blessed with such a day. It rained for the first six hours of his trip. When he finally pulled off the highway in Meductic—a hamlet snuggled up to the Saint John River—Neil passed the comfortable bungalow of town mayor James "Nort" Hargrove. Mr. Hargrove also happens to be Sabian's vice-president of manufacturing. The "Nort" comes from the Norton motorcycles that Hargrove used to race.

Mind you, Nort's racing days were thirty years ago, since which time he has become a major force in the community of cymbal makers. Much of the knowledge he acquired over that time has been bequeathed to Sabian product designer Mark Love. It is Mark who worked face-to-face with Neil Peart for a full day (then long-distance for many months) on a new line of cymbals that was ultimately dubbed Paragon.



Rush's master drummer motorcycled to the Sabian factory to share his cymbal concepts with the company's design team.

Cymbal designer Mark Love worked directly with Neil Peart to create the Paragon series, including the 19" China shown here.

Mark's Love For Cymbals

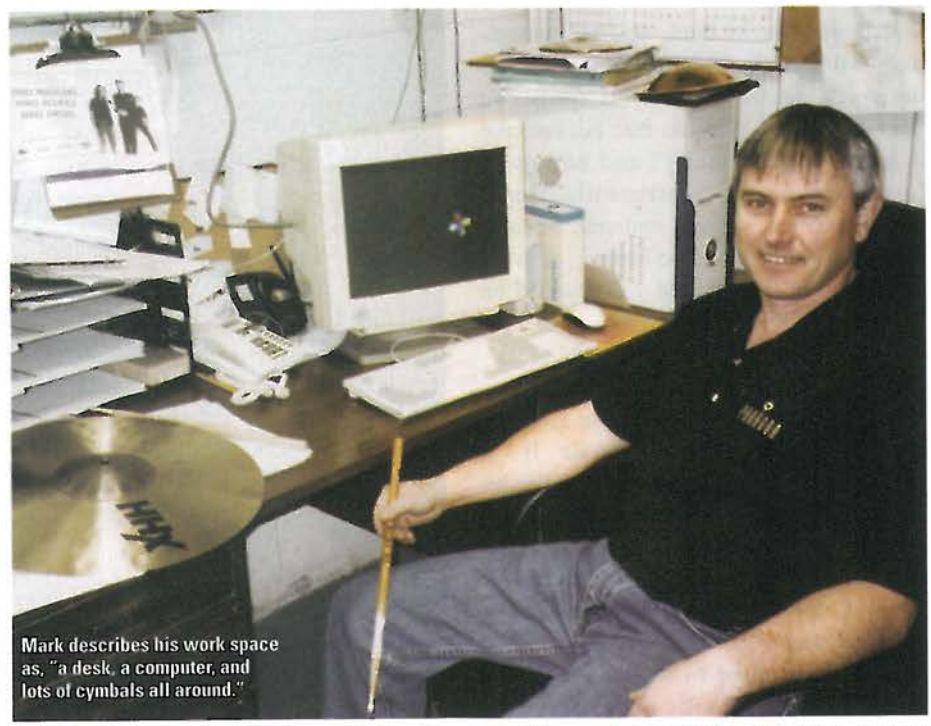
Sabian's forty-five-year-old product specialist sits in an open office at the rear of the factory. "My desk is right in the corner of the vault," says Mark. "There's a computer, and cymbals are all over the place. It looks like total confusion, but it's organized from my point of view."

Mark hastens to clarify that it's not just *him* in R&D. He's quick to mention his mentor,

Nort Hargrove, along with Sabian president Dan Barker, Wayne Blanchard (drummer and senior marketing manager), and "guys coming up behind me, like Billy Clark and Dave Williams. We're one large team." But the buck has to stop somewhere, and, in most instances, it stops at Mark Love.

When Love started working with cymbals in 1980, Sabian was not even a glimmer in founder Robert Zildjian's eye. Mark worked at a plant called Azco, which Robert built in Meductic, churning out Zildjian cymbals. Back then, the factory wasn't the bustling place it is today, so Mark had time to, as he says, "play with things and become proficient at it." Today, such experimentation is the core of his job. Mark describes his role as "working with artists and creating new sounds."

Although he's had a hand in numerous cymbal developments, Love really cut his teeth with Sabian's HHX line, taking the reins from Nort Hargrove. "Nort was responsible for the Manhattan Ride," explains Mark. "That was originally under our Hand Hammered line, but it was really HHX hammering. Over the years, we'd introduce other new models, and pieces of the puzzle came together in what became the HHX series. Apart from that line and the newer Paragons, I feel closest to the Evolution series, on which I worked very closely with Dave Weckl for a year.



Mark describes his work space as, "a desk, a computer, and lots of cymbals all around."

"Dave was a perfectionist," Mark recalls. "Just before we debuted the line, we had crashes that were so thin and papery that we thought they'd never stand up. We figured we'd add just a couple of ounces of

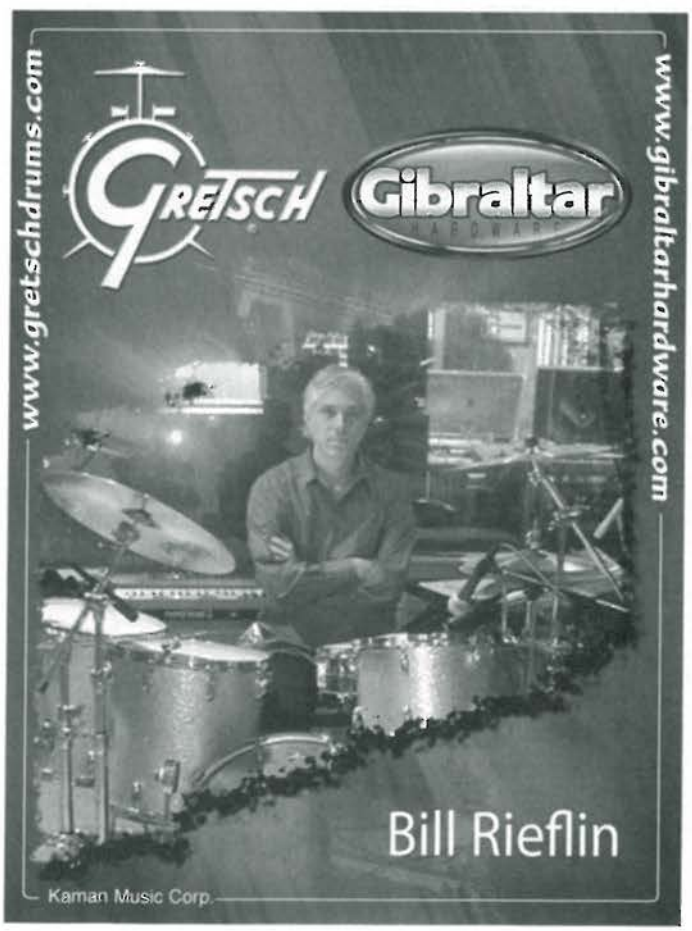
weight to make them more durable. We sent Dave some of those, and he immediately wrote back, 'This is *nothing* like we designed.' So we stuck to his specs. We were amazed to find out that because the cymbals were 'buttery' and had more 'give,' they broke *less* frequently. You're always second-guessing yourself, because you want drummers to be happy, you want dealers to be happy, and *you* want to be happy."

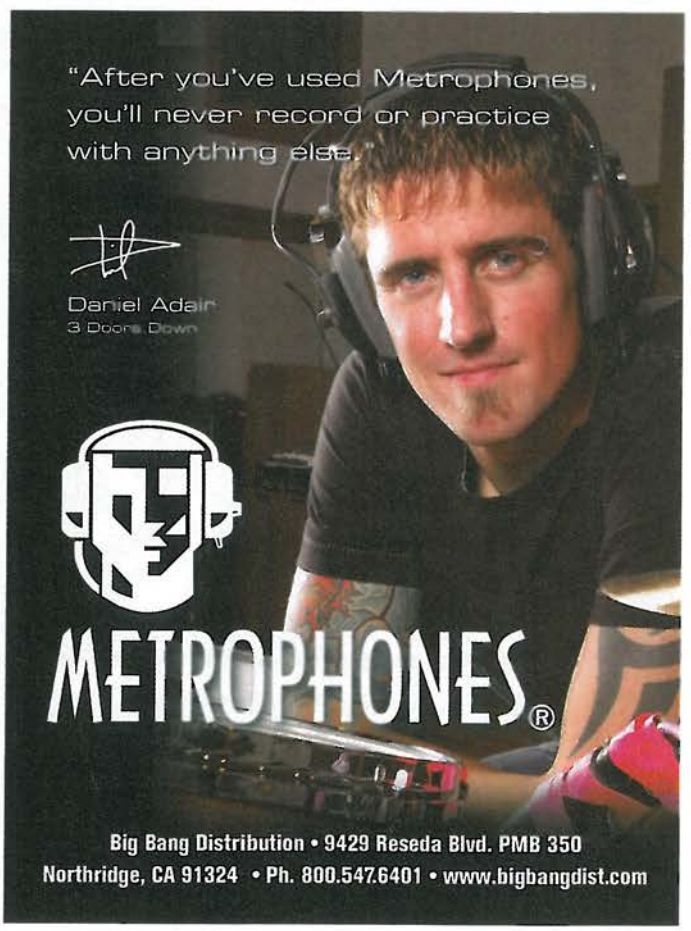
The Tall Man Cometh

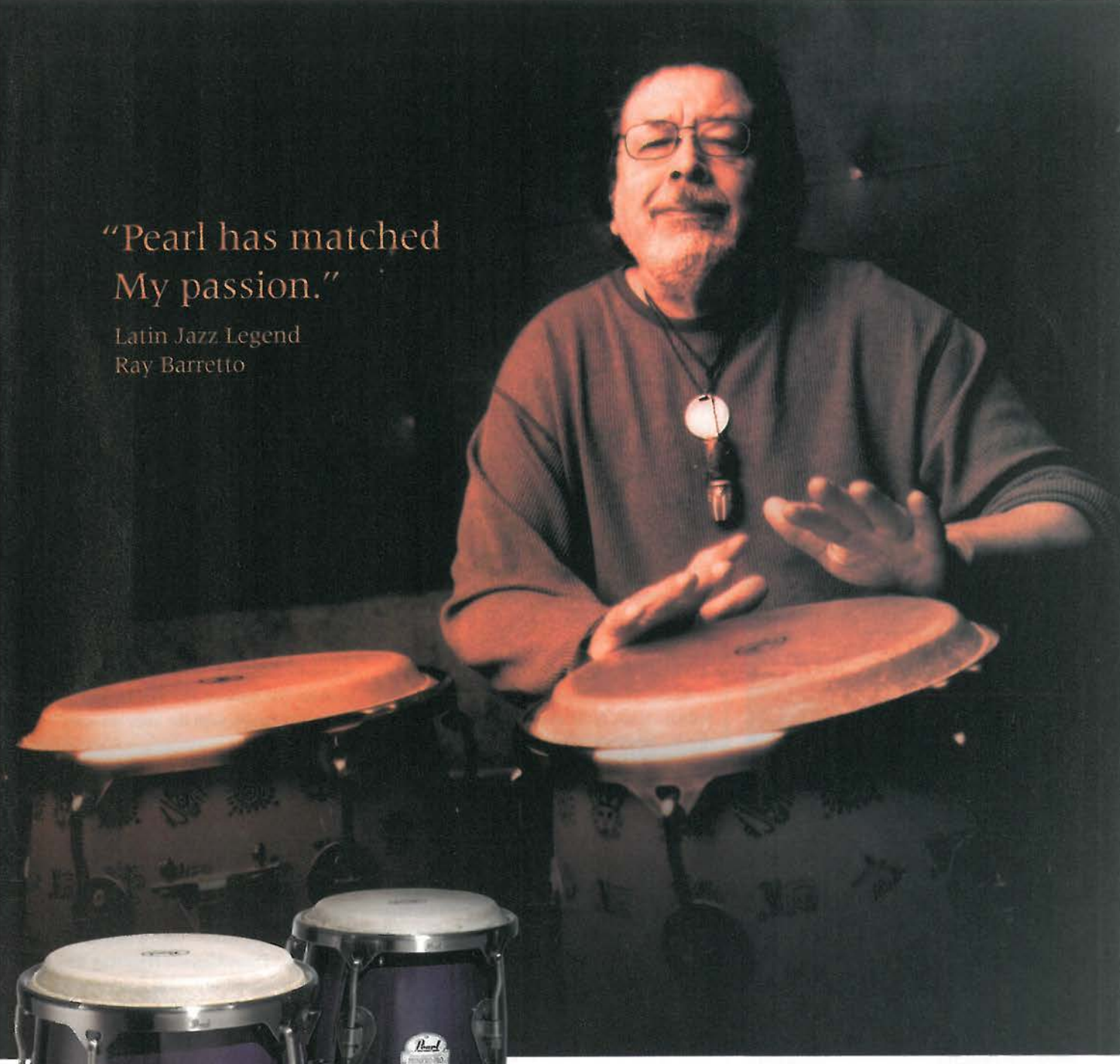
Which brings us back to the story of Neil Peart's arrival in Meductic. It's a story in which Mark gained credibility by replicating an old Wuhan Chinese cymbal that Peart held sacred. "It was no big problem," recalls Love, "provided we scoped the thing out correctly and applied the necessary 'cold work' [processes applied to a casting after it leaves the oven]." Neil's enthusiasm grew with the very first batch of China prototypes. But let's not leap too far ahead in our narrative.

First things first: Why Sabian? "What Neil told us," replies Mark, "is that he'd heard some Sabians at a friend's house and was interested. He approached us, and we sent him a bunch of samples. They weren't *all* what he was looking for, but they were close enough to make him want to make the trip here.

Mark and cymbal tester Kevin Lasky evaluate the merits of a new batch of crashes before shelving them to "age in" their sound.







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Shop Talk

"When Neil arrived," Mark continues, "the first thing he wanted to do was educate himself about all of our series, and about the hammering and lathing that affected the sound. I took cymbals off the rack and played them, explaining the effects of various treatments. That's how we came up with the Paragon ride's hand-hammered bell. We were looking at the Liquid ride and Rock ride, and Neil found their hammered bells rich and complex."

By the end of the tour, Neil had selected a complete set of cymbals off the shelves, focusing on the AA line. Next, he and Mark laid plans for tweaking the existing sounds. "We set up a kit, and Neil began playing," recalls Mark. "I could 'read' what he liked by his expression, and I'd change cymbals without him stopping. He told me that everything I put up kept getting better and better. We seemed to be connecting in that aspect."

The Process Continues

After Neil departed, Mark and the Sabian team built prototypes by the hundreds, sending selections to Neil for his evaluation. "Some of the things we did," says Mark, "such as the pinpoint lathing on top and the coarser lathing on the bottom of the ride, weren't features that we had decided on while Neil was at the factory. But I wanted to change the *feel*. We'd never combined different lathing styles like that before. The result was that it made a heavier cymbal play like a lighter cymbal."

Aside from the Chinese cymbal that Mark replicated with ease, there was one other cymbal that Neil focused on particularly: a 22" ride. Says Mark, "The ride that Neil had been playing for the past twenty years was a Zildjian Rock ride made in Canada—one of the ones from Azco. That was kind of ironic. He liked our AA Rock ride, so we wanted to keep that weight and profile. Those are heavy cymbals that will give articulation to ride patterns. But you can also crash the Paragon ride, and it'll spread. That's a feature that no ride of that weight had before."

So working with Neil wasn't simply a matter of copying his existing cymbals? "Not at all," Mark emphasizes. "The line *started* there, but has evolved into a totally different instrument. Once he had the finished Paragon set, Neil invited me up to Montreal to see Rush. It was the best cymbal sound I've ever heard at a concert. Every cymbal was like glass. Being so involved with their creation, I was pretty proud."

The Jeweler's Craft

Each of Neil's personal cymbals is emblazoned with the distinctive Paragon logo in rich gold ink. This was quite a coup for Sabian, considering that this was a man who had erased logos from the face of every other cymbal he's owned.

Mark explains, "That was because Neil sees his cymbals as 'jewelry.' The name 'Paragon' has several meanings, but one of them refers to a diamond of a hundred carats or more—a symbol of excellence. Neil came up with that name. He absolutely didn't want large black logos, but if we could come up with something classy, he might go with it. That was *another* R&D project. We'd send him cymbals with various versions of the logo. When we did a photo shoot in LA, Neil arrived with a bottle of acetone [to remove the logos], just in case he wasn't happy with the ones we sent."

Humble Abode, Proud Sounds

Traveling to the wilds of New Brunswick and working with Sabian is a unique experience. Let's put it this way: Take a two-minute walk out the back of the factory and you're fishing for salmon on the banks of the Saint John River. Take a half-hour walk across the Trans-Canada Highway and up a densely wooded hill, and you're seriously *lost*. Even so, this unlikely dot on the map has become the setting for cutting-edge sonic innovations. Mark Love enthuses, "We're always looking for new sounds, or ways to improve on sounds we've already got—no matter whether it's a B8 or a cast cymbal."

Mark's eyes twinkle as he lets a cat out of the bag: "I've been working on these 'artisan rides'—old-style rides that spread. They're going to be sizzly cymbals, like something frying in the frying pan, with some dirt in there. They'll have a lot of character—and aggression, too."

Aggression. Spoken in Mark's gentle voice and imbued with his essential humility, the word takes on a special, Sabian-type irony.

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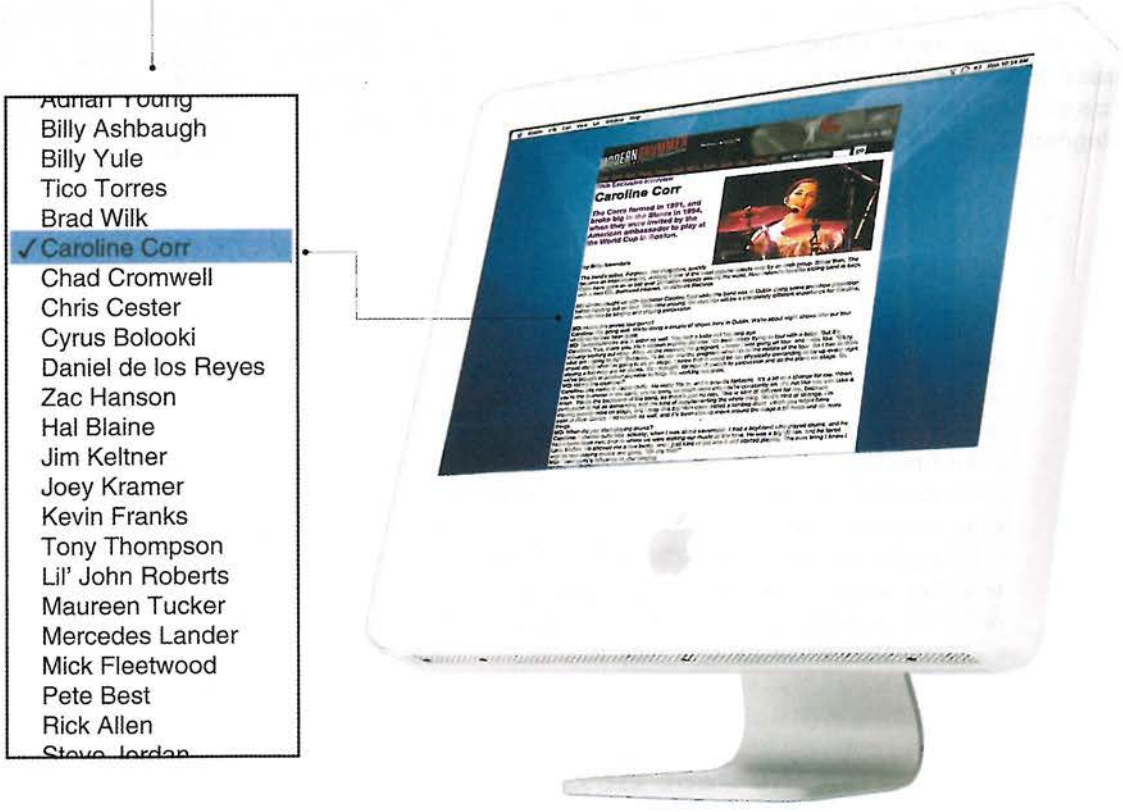

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Working For A Genius

My Time With Ray Charles

by John Bryant

My ride pulls up to the hotel in Denver, and I notice a young African-American man standing next to a stack of drums. He's waiting for a cab, ready to leave. I get out and start to carry my drums toward the entrance behind him. We eye each other, knowing what's happened even though neither of us speaks. I walk closer and he gives me a thin smile that telegraphs gloom, frustration, and defeat.

"Good luck, man," he says. "I hope you come out better than I did." This was my introduction to working for Ray Charles.

The drummer I was about to replace some thirty years ago had been chewed up and spat out by a legend whose quest for perfection thrilled the world but challenged musicians up to his final days. Ray Charles was a genius who knew exactly what he wanted and demanded it from everyone around him.

I played drums for Ray in 1974 and '75, doing recording sessions and TV gigs, in addition to hiring the orchestras for some of his symphony concerts. I'm not really sure why Ray and I seemed to hit it off so well. I think it may have had something to do with his left foot.

Putting His Foot Down

From the drum throne behind Ray I saw it all: the glare of the lights, the band all around, the eager audience, and the backsides of the Raelets. But most importantly, I had to see Ray's left foot. "I don't change!" sayeth Brother Ray—a declaration that applied to his musical idiosyncrasies and his lifestyle. It was the first commandment you learned on the job. For the drummer, it meant that Ray always expected you to watch his feet. When that leather sole hit the floor, you're talking ground zero: the downbeat, the tempo, and the dynamics. The beginning, middle, and end of Ray's musical expectations were conducted by his left foot. And for drummers, that's where the trouble always started.

From day one, drummers learn that tempo is their responsibility. All musicians are expected to play with good rhythm, but an experienced drummer's inner clock has been honed to a fine degree of precision.

Instead of worrying about melody and harmony, his game is all about timekeeping. Any drummer worth his salt knows that the band will have one eye on the conductor, the other on the music, and at least one ear cocked for him. And Ray Charles knew that better than anybody.

"Look, man," Ray once said to me, "you go with me and the band will follow. As long as you and I are playin' together, they *have* to go with us."

And so we're back to that left foot. When any drummer for Ray set up, he had to make sure that he could see Ray's feet. Obviously since he was blind Ray couldn't watch a conductor, and he wasn't able to look into the eyes of his musicians to send a message. Instead, his feet were his stamp of approval. His left foot effectively served as his conducting baton. He knew that if the drummer was dancing right along with those feet, all would be right with the world. And drummers knew that if they were not precisely with his feet, especially that "downbeat" left foot, they were entering a musician's hell.

In The Hot Seat

Ray Charles came from the "old school," where you showed what you were made of on the bandstand. There, your experience, your knowledge, and your art were on display for all to judge. With Ray's generation of musicians, every time you got on a stage it was a contest to see who could cut it and who couldn't. There was no forgiving or forgetting. Ray's set of rules demanded that a musician had to play with *his* tempo and dynamics, while still being able to read music and improvise. You had to be comfortable with rock, pop, blues, country, and, most importantly, jazz.

And so, there was a price to pay if you were the drummer and you failed to attach your mind and soul to Ray's feet. The punishment was immediate, usually delivered with a quick upper body turn in a burst of fury. Ray combined hot expletives with a look that burned a hole through you and made you freeze at the same time. If the drummer listened to his own clock instead of watching those size 10s, look out! And since Ray had to know whether you were watching him, he was known to speed up or slow down, just to make sure you were with him.

On Ray's stage, things had to be played his way. During a concert in Germany in 1975, I was feeling a bit cocky. I decided to change the beat on one of Ray's best-known hits, "What'd I Say." Not a good idea. That drum beat is very important in the history of R&B and rock 'n' roll. Its New Orleans funkiness and distinct Latin cymbal technique can make a Baptist dance on the tables. So when I attempted to leave my own mark on this Rock of Gibraltar, Ray recoiled like he'd been shot in the back, immediately firing some well-worn words in my direction, which everyone heard. I jumped back on track, but it was too late. The song ended the set—and also, I feared, my career with Ray.

The road manager came over and told me that RC wanted me in his dressing room right now. When I walked in, Ray was hot. "How could you do that, son? Don't you know that beat is written in stone? It can't be played any other way! You ever do that again, and you'll be on the side of the road!"

Officially on probation, I had to earn

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back Ray's trust. There came a testing point in France. We were rehearsing a new piece of music that Ray had never heard before. That's when you could appreciate his musical genius, including his memory. After the band played the arrangement a couple of times, Ray started to put his signature on it.

"John," he said to me, "when we get to the chorus, I want you to play, 'Boom, bop, bop, boom.'" In drummers' terminology, this translates to bass drum, snare drum, snare drum, bass drum. In Ray's terms, it became left foot stomp, knee slap, knee slap, left foot stomp.

I played the part, and Ray grinned, saying, "That's it, honey. Just like that, every time!" That night I fully expected Ray to put the new piece of music in the concert while it was fresh in his mind, but it didn't happen. Not the next night either, or the next. About *two weeks* later, Ray called the song. As the band cautiously dipped its big toe into the unfamiliar waters, Ray was doing backflips off the high board. Just before we got to the chorus, Ray interrupted his physical undulations, held perfectly still, and cocked his left ear towards me.

"Boom, bop, bop, boom," shouted the drums.

Ray returned to his swaying and playing, satisfied that I was paying attention. No name-calling, no expressions of disgust, no expletives. Back to business as usual, lesson learned.

Moving On, Then Back Again

I loved nearly every moment of my time with Ray. If you played by his rules, you were allowed to take part in his genius, which was a gift beyond words that I will always treasure. But in 1975, I realized that the only way I could regain my control as a drummer was to leave Ray. I simply had to get back to my inner clock and find my own path. I knew he could understand.

Fast forward to 1996. I was called to come back into Ray's world to play a concert in Hartford, Connecticut, and I was anxious about how it was going to go. The last time I had played with Ray he was forty-four and already a legend. I was fresh out of the jazz department of North Texas State University, learning the difference between that school and "Ray's School."

This time around, I was twenty-one years older, a little smarter, and a bit more confident. I was also a whole lot more appreciative of the talents of Ray Charles. He now had a head of gray hair, and the high notes were a little tougher for him. But I was sure that everything else was exactly the same. I decided to let RC know, as soon as I could, that I knew this.

In the hour just before the concert, Ray sent word for me to come to his dressing room. He received me with that famous, broad smile, mixed with laughter and lots of handshaking, touching, and nudging. We rekindled memories that made us laugh and appreciate how long it had been since we had played together. And then I saw an opportunity.

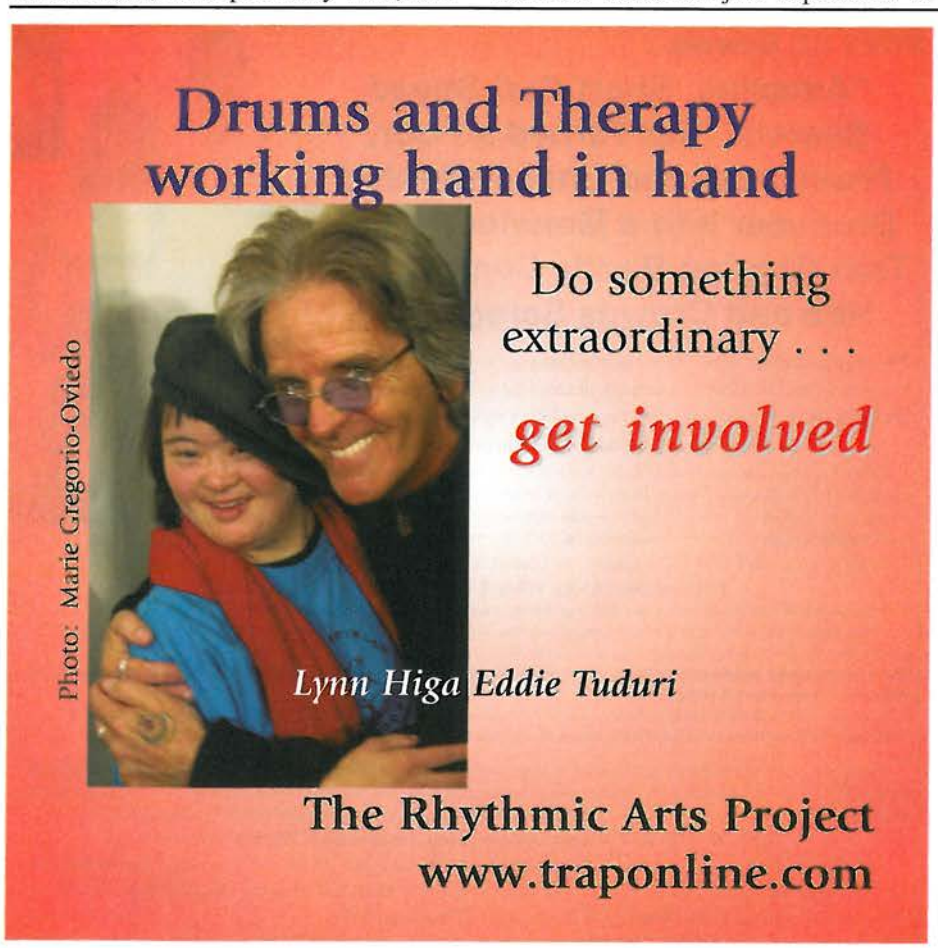
"Well, Ray," I said. "You know, some things never change."

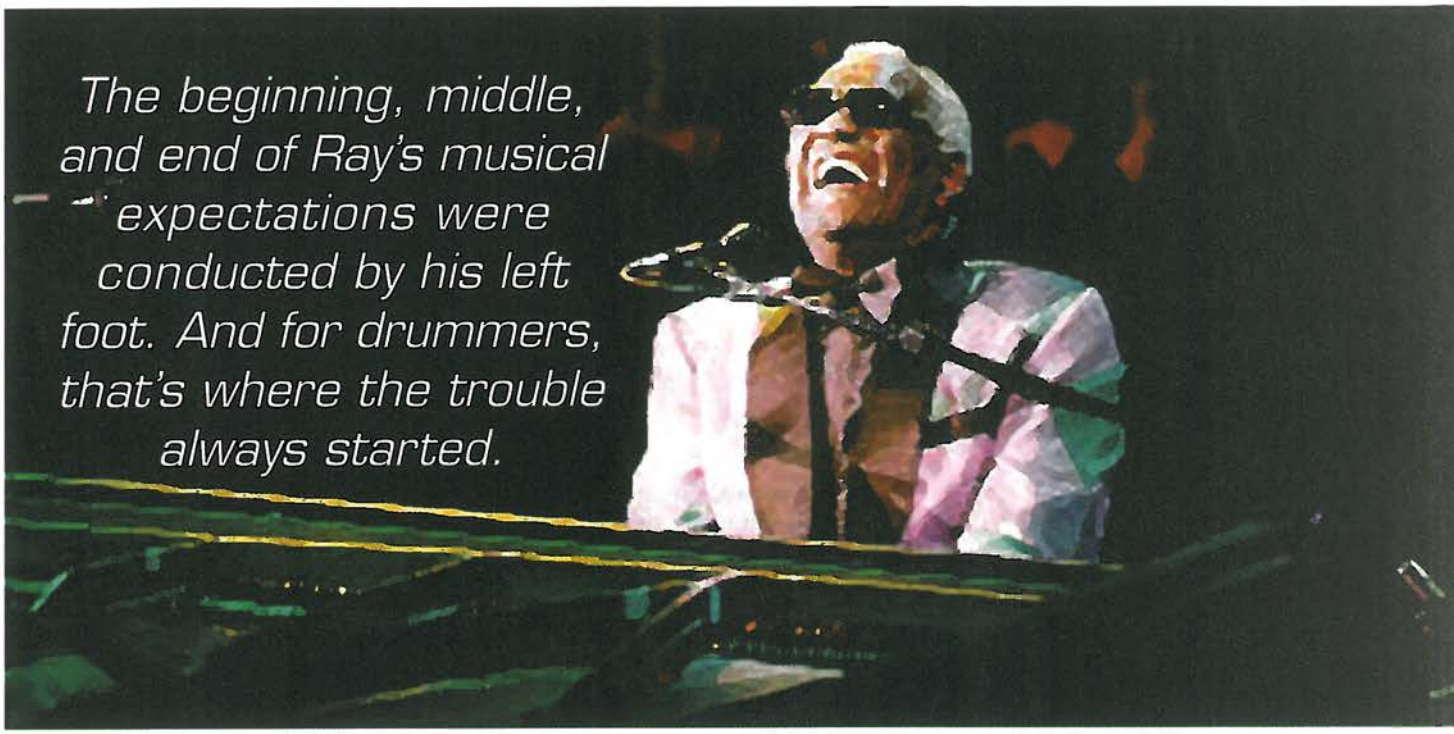
"Amen," intoned Brother Ray, with an expression that told me that he knew that *I* knew: Watch his left foot. Play his music the way it has always been played.

My name was announced. I walked out to center stage and bowed to the audience, then took my place at the drums in the midst of a sixty-piece orchestra, behind where RC would be seated. As I sat down, I looked in front of me to the spot where Ray's left foot would be dancing. My heart skipped a beat. There sat an alto saxophone on its stand, innocently blocking my view of Ray's exclamation point. Ray occasionally played that sax, but I didn't expect it to be *there* of all places. Twenty-one years earlier, I would have panicked and called for a stagehand to move it. This time I stopped to think about it.

I realized that it wasn't really about seeing that foot hit the floor. It had more to do with knowing where it was coming from. This time around, I was willing to gamble that I was a better musician. That I could play *with* Ray, rather than react like a heat-seeking missile. One thing was sure: It wouldn't take long to find out.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, *Raaaaay Charles*." The band hit the intro, the crowd went wild, and as soon as Brother Ray was seated behind the piano, he





absorbed every bit of attention that this concert hall could offer. The first song went by without a hitch. We settled into the second one and my anxiousness began to fade. By the time we got to "Georgia...." the only thing on my mind was the beauty of the moment, and how wonderful it is to be able to go back and to be in the present, all at the same time.

Ray's Way

Ray's way of doing things was uncompromising, maybe because he loved the music more than anything. His blindness brought focus to his control. First, he listened to his inner voice, then he sang out for himself. He played piano for all, and talked to the drummer by foot.

The news of Ray's death made me think that he had put his foot down for the last time. But I was wrong. In his final interview, given to David Ritz in *Rolling Stone*, Ray addressed his own mortality by removing his suit of armor and acknowledging the price of his purpose.

"I hurt some musicians," he said, "looking for everything to be perfect. You know me, man. I'm always [expletive] with the drummers. If they don't get my time, I pitch a bitch. Treat them bad. I know I hurt people. Tell them I have feelings, too. I can feel their feelings, man. Tell them I appreciate them. Just tell them Brother Ray loves them."

For me, Ray's apology to the drummers with whom he constantly jousted served as an encore that he reserved only for those who saw and heard *everything* he did: his musicians. But even had he miraculously recovered, his apology doesn't mean that he would have done anything differently. The same heart that couldn't lie about the music would have always beat at a tempo that challenged and inspired us all. My time with Ray, from fast to slow, will always be with me.

John Bryant lives in Dallas. He is a music producer, drummer, and co-owner of Bryant-Hames Music. He is also a member of D'Drum, a world music percussion group.

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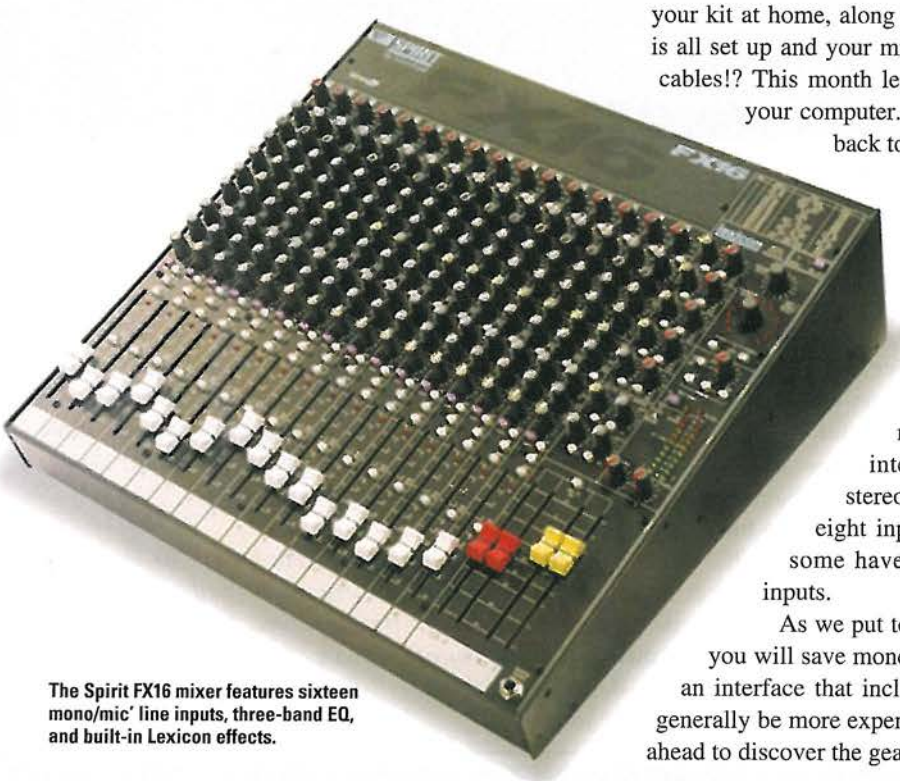
Home Recording For Drummers

Part 2: The Audio Chain

by Chris Vrenna

Ding-dong! Vrenna calling to continue our discussion on recording your live drums at home, both creatively and economically.

Last month in Part 1 we looked at the various ways and places to set up your kit at home, along with several microphone options. Now that your kit is all set up and your microphones are placed, what do we do with all these cables!? This month let's look at the audio chain from the microphone to your computer. Things may get a little technical here, but we'll get back to having fun soon, I promise.



The Spirit FX16 mixer features sixteen mono/mic' line inputs, three-band EQ, and built-in Lexicon effects.

Line-Level Implications

Microphones have a very low output level, therefore they always need a microphone preamplifier to boost their signal up to what's called "line level" before it gets patched into your computer's audio interface. While we look at various preamp options, another thing to keep in mind is how many inputs your computer's audio interface has. Some lower-cost interfaces only have stereo in (two channels). Many other interfaces come with eight inputs. Sometimes all eight inputs are line-level, but some have built-in mic' preamps on four or even all eight inputs.

As we put together various recording options, keep in mind that you will save money by not having to buy separate preamps if you buy an interface that includes some, but those more featured interfaces will generally be more expensive. It'll be up to you to do some research and plan ahead to discover the gear that works best for you.

Mic' Preamps, EQ, And Compressors

Microphone preamps come in all shapes and sizes. And like microphones themselves, each has its own unique tonal characteristic that becomes part of the sound itself.

The Vintech 473 4-channel preamp features a great vintage sound.

Preamps can also be very costly—especially when you consider that *every* individual microphone you want to use needs its own preamp. Still considered some of the best in the world are true vintage Neve or API preamps taken from old recording consoles. Just one vintage Neve model 1073 can cost $5,000! But there are several cost-effective, rack-mountable, 8-channel preamps that are great as well. Some include the Focusrite Octopre, PreSonus M80, and Digimax LT. And Vintech makes a beautiful 4-channel preamp that has a great "vintage" sound to it.

Compressor/limiters can be used to improve sound, or as effects. Inexpensive but high-quality models are currently available from Alesis, Alto, Aphex, PreSonus, and a number of other brands.

Once the mic' signal is boosted, any tonal changes you may want to try are achieved through EQing and compression. EQs change various frequencies of the sound. Compressors are leveling amps that keep a continuous range of level while preventing that signal from overloading. If you play your bass drum from very soft to very hard, a compressor will help even out the overall level to your computer. To do this, you would simply patch the line output of the mic' preamp into the input of any outboard EQ or compressor, then patch its output into the computer's audio interface.

EQ and compression are often used to help get a better sound. For example, try adding a little low end on your bass drum if the raw drum tone isn't quite big enough, or give a little extra smack to your snare drum by adding compression.

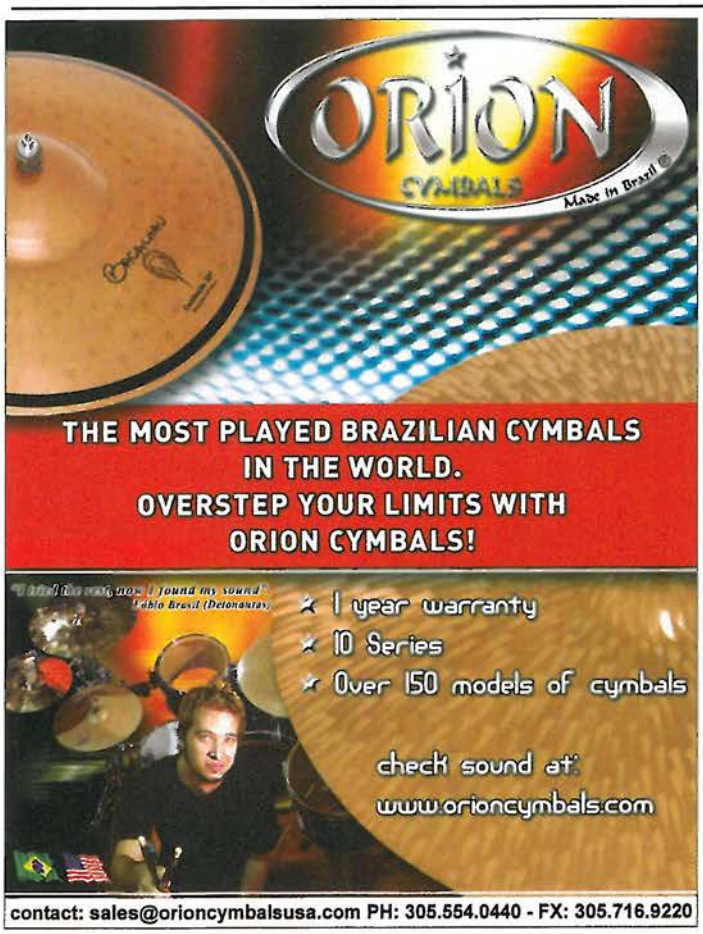
EQ and compression can also be used as effects. Overly compressing a room mic' will give you that huge, washy, Zeppelin-ish sound. Or try extremely EQing one of your room mic's so it sounds like it's coming out of an old AM radio.

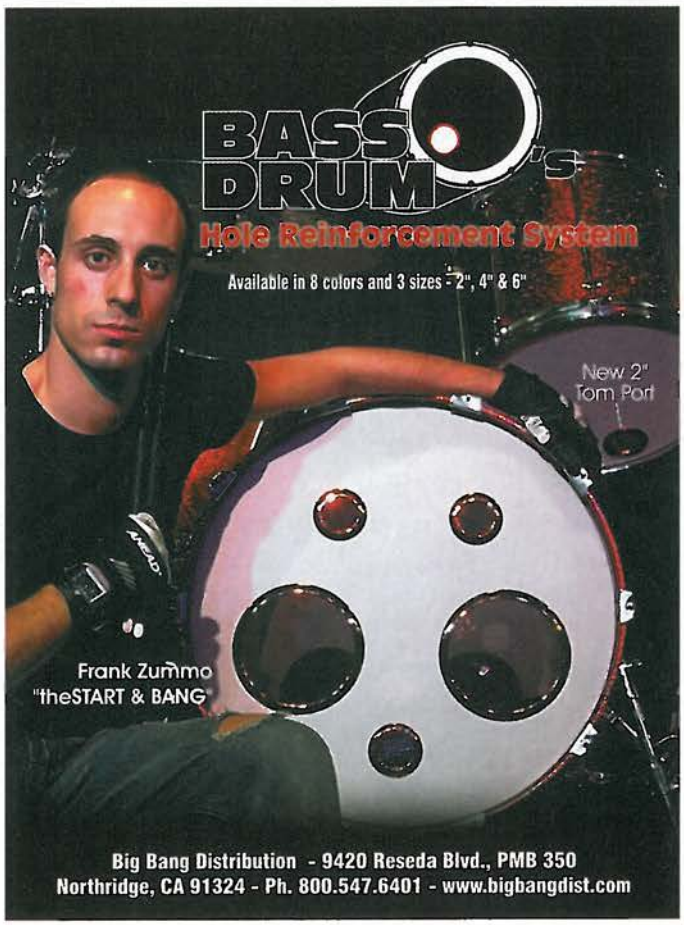
EQs and compressors are all unique in sound and approach, and they're available in every price range. Usually they're either mono (one channel) or stereo (two channels). I own a variety of types, and I patch them in on individual preamps depending on the sound I'm looking for.

Summing And Consoles

Right about now you're thinking to yourself, "Let's see...I have mic's for my kick, snare, hi-hats, two toms, and overheads. That's seven microphones—*plus* I want to try two cool-sounding room mic's. That's nine mic's! So, I need nine preamps, some EQs and compressors, and a computer audio interface with nine inputs, when Chris just said they usually come with two to eight? I'll have to mortgage my house to afford all of this!"

Not to worry. A great solution to this situation is to use a small recording mixer. There are several great-sounding mixers available that include multiple mic' pre-





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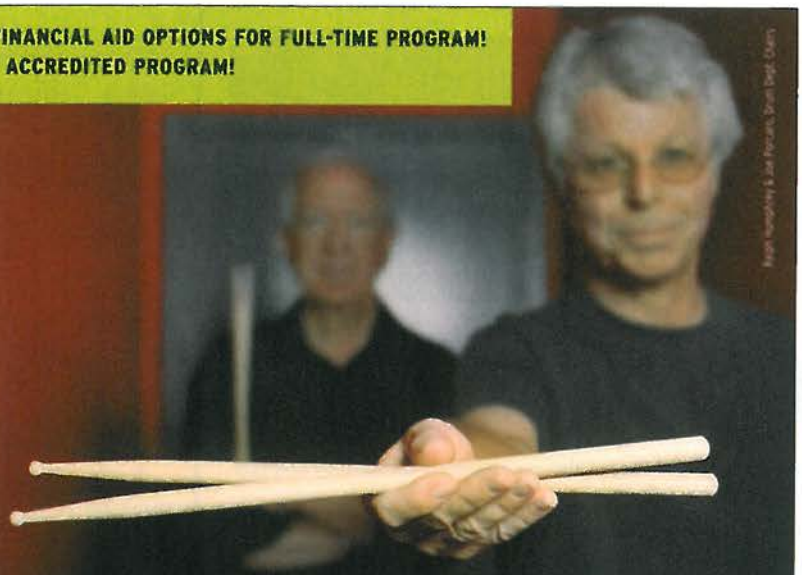

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Electronic Insights

amps, on-board EQ, insert patching for external EQs and compressors, and even multiple summing busses (signal paths). One of my favorites has always been the Mackie 1604-VLZ-Pro. For under $1,000 you get sixteen great-sounding mic' preamps, with 3-band EQ on every channel, inserts, and four individual busses, in addition to the main stereo out.

The great thing about having several busses is that you can separate some mic's and premix others, depending on the number of inputs on your audio interface. For example, send just the kick mic' out of buss one, snare mic' out of buss two, premix the hats and overheads in stereo out of busses three and four, and premix the room mic's out of the stereo buss. This setup will keep the kick and snare separate for greater control when you mix, and it brings all your mic's down to only six inputs into your audio interface.

Mackie also just introduced a new line of mixers called Onyx. These have improved-sounding preamps and EQ, along with digital in and out for direct computer hookup. Other four-buss mixers include the Soundcraft M12 and the Spirit FX16, which even has built-in Lexicon effects!

At this point we have your kit set up in a cool-sounding room in your home, microphones placed on and around the kit as we discussed in Part 1, and microphones patched in to preamps, EQs, and compressors, either by way of a small mixer and/or stand-alone pieces of hardware, and ready to be patched into an audio interface to be recorded into your computer. In our next installment, we'll look at the final piece of this recording puzzle—various types of computer recording software and audio interfaces. See you then.

Chris Vrenna is the former drummer with Nine Inch Nails. He has also produced and remixed tracks for many top acts, has written the music to a popular video game, and leads his own critically acclaimed band, tweaker.

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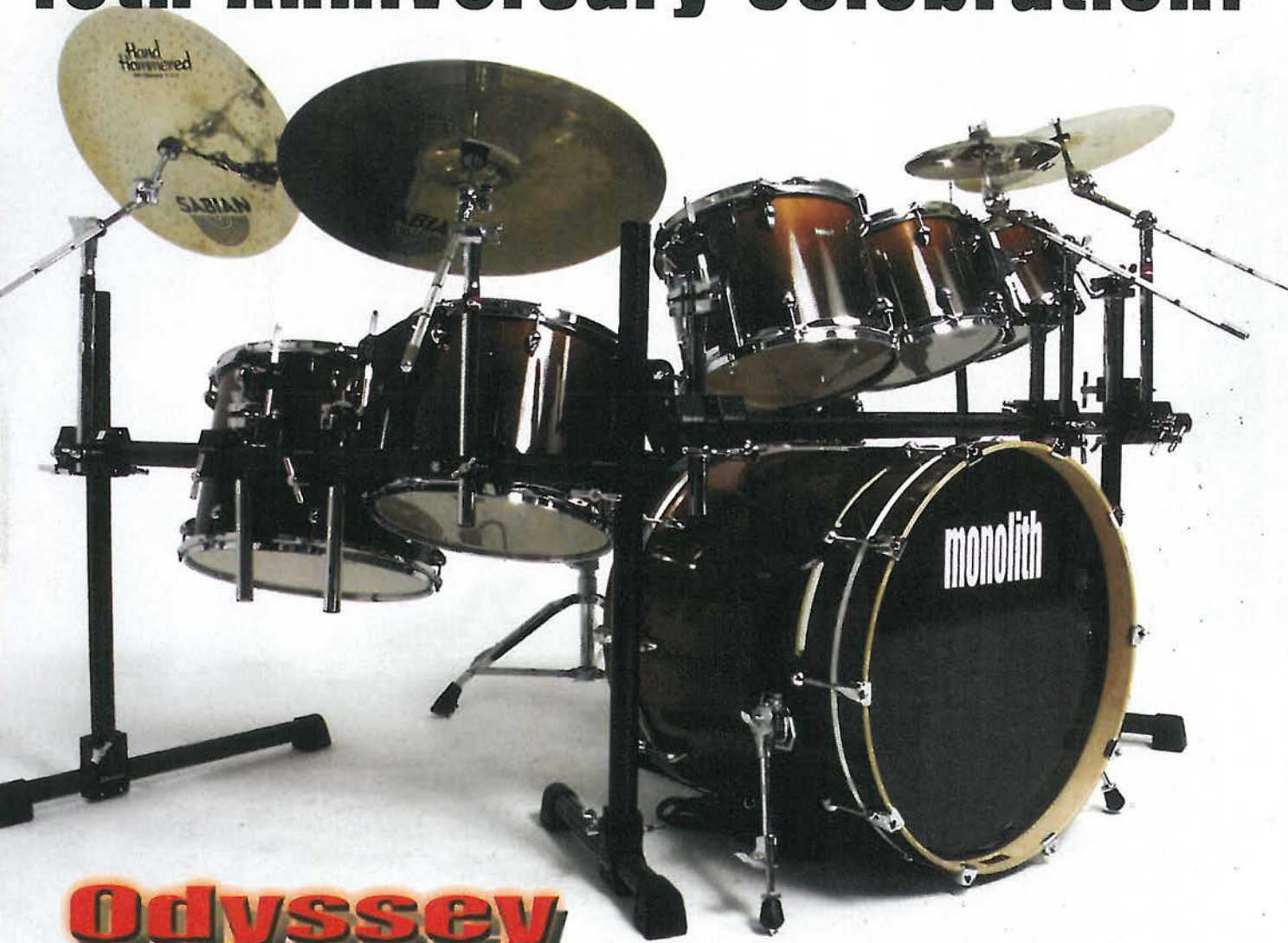

Odyssey

Grand Prize: An incredible, built-to-your specs, 7-piece Monolith Odyssey Limited Edition Curly Maple drumset, a set of Sabian AAX cymbals, Shure drum set microphones, a Clark Synthesis Platinum Tactile Monitor with throne, *and* a set of Elite Air cases from XL Specialty.

Consumer Disclosure

1. To enter: Send a 3.5" x 5.5" or 4" x 6" postcard with your name, address, telephone number, and email address (if applicable) to: Modern Drummer/Monolith/Sabian Contest, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 or visit www.moderndrummer.com and follow the links to the Monolith 10th Anniversary Contest. 2. Enter as often as you wish, but each hand-written postcard entry must be mailed separately. 3. ODDS OF WINNING EACH PRIZE DEPEND ON THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ENTRIES RECEIVED. 4. CONTEST BEGINS 4/1/05 AND ENDS 6/30/05. POSTCARDS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY 6/30/05 AND RECEIVED BY 7/6/05. 5. The winner will be selected by random drawing on or before July 14, 2005 and notified by phone on or about July 15, 2005. 6. Employees and their immediate families of Modern Drummer, Monolith, Sabian, XL Specialty, Shure, Clark Synthesis, and their affiliates are ineligible. 7. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, misdirected, and/or delayed entries. 8. Open to the residents of US and Canada (except in Florida and the Province of Quebec), 12 years of age or older. Void where prohibited by law. 9. One prize awarded per household per contest. 10. Grand Prize: (1) One winner will receive a Monolith Odyssey 7-piece, curly maple drumset with spaceRACK system and hardware. (Winner to chose finish, bass drum size, snare drum depth, and floor tom depths (legs or Nexus G2 universal carbon fibre mounts). Sabian AAX Performance set includes: (1 pair) 14" regular hi-hats, (1) 16" medium crash cymbal, and (1) 20" medium ride with hardshell case. Sabian AAX Effects Pack includes: (1) 10" splash, and (1) 18" Chinese cymbal, with a video and a

Modern Drummer, Monolith, Sabian, Shure, Clark Synthesis, and XL Specialty are honoring Monolith's 10th anniversary—and you could be a big winner as a result of the celebrations!

It's been ten years since Monolith began constructing drumsets utilizing their own innovative designs, techniques, and materials. Now to mark their anniversary, the company is giving away one of their premium Odyssey kits—plus a second set, from their Profile series and an Odyssey snare drum. Be the proud owner of your very own Monolith drums. Here's how:

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Second Prize: A Monolith Profile 5-piece drumset, a Sabian XS20 cymbal set, Shure microphones, a Clark Synthesis Silver Tactile Monitor with throne, and a set of Elite Air cases from XL Specialty.

Shure microphones

Clark Synthesis Tactile Monitor with throne

XL Specialty Elite Air Cases

Third Prize: A Monolith Odyssey 10-ply cherry snare drum, plus an Elite Air snare drum case from XL Specialty.

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towel. Shure Microphones DMK57-52 set includes: (3) SM57s, (1) Beta52A, (3) A56D drum-mounting systems, and a carrying case. From Clark Synthesis: TM 429 platinum tactile monitor with throne. XL Specialty Percussion Protechtor Cases, Elite Air Series: (1) trap case, (1) snare drum case, (1) bass drum case, and (5) tom cases. Suggested retail value: $9,962.00. Second prize: (1) One Monolith Profile 5-piece drumset in natural satin finish includes: 8x10, 9x12, and 14x14 toms, a 16x22 bass drum, and a 5 1/2x14 snare with hardware. Sabian XS20 Performance Set includes: (1) pair of 14" hi-hats, (1) 16" crash, (1) 20" ride. Shure Microphones PGDMK4-XLR includes: (3) PG56s, (1) PG52, (3) A56D drum-mounts, (4) XLR to XLR cables, and carrying case. Clark Synthesis TM239 Silver Tactile Monitor with throne. XL Specialty Protechtor Elite Air Series cases: (1) trap case, (1) snare drum case, (1) bass drum case, and (3) tom cases. Suggested retail value: $3,404. Third Prize: (1) Monolith Odyssey cherry 5 1/2x14 snare drum. XL Specialty Protechtor Cases, Elite Air Series snare drum case. Suggested retail price: $1,250. 11. Approximate retail value of contest: $14,616. 12. Sponsored by Modern Drummer Publications, Inc., 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, (973) 239-4140. 13. This game subject to the complete Official Rules. For a copy of the complete Official Rules or a winners list, write to Modern Drummer Publications/Monolith/Sabian Official Rules/Winners List, 12 Old Bridge Rd., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009.

Scott Abels

Up For Any Challenge

Story by Waleed Rashidi • Photos by Alexis Henry

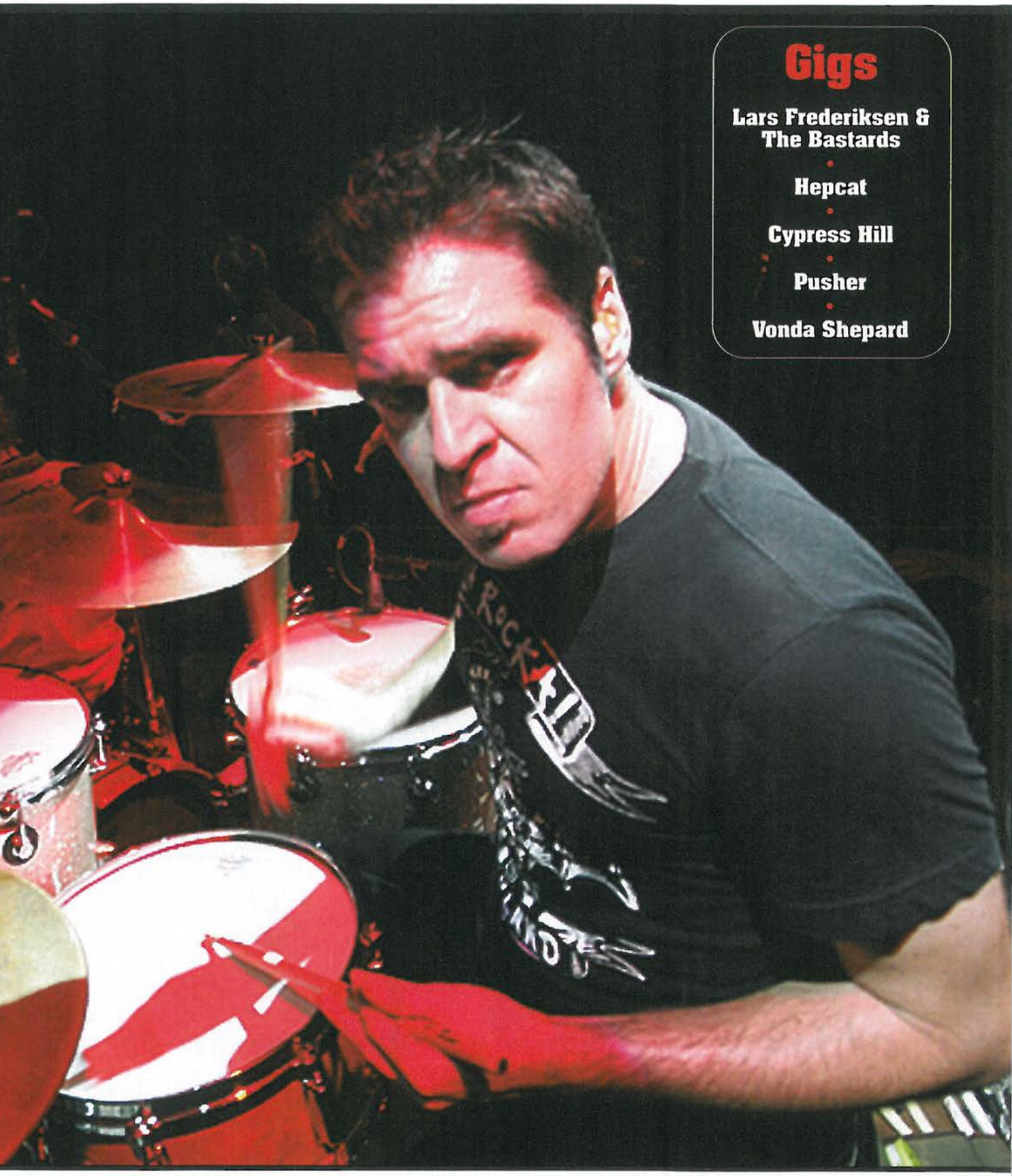
"Have you ever heard of Flogging Molly?" asks drummer Scott Abels. "A little reggae side project might be brewing with some of those guys." Leave it up to a drummer like Abels and his extensive musical vocabulary to lead an Irish pub-flavored punk act into jamming on Jamaican vibes. After all, with a background that encompasses jazz, ska, punk, reggae, funk, alternative, soul, hip-hop, and Latin, Abels' rhythms are, in a sense, world beat music.

Abels' recording ledger proves it. He's done Depeche Mode and Manu Chao remixes, albums with Cypress Hill, Hepcat, Pusher, Muggs, and Lars Frederiksen & The Bastards, not to mention his live work with Let's Go Bowling and Vonda Shepard. This is a broad range of artists that shows his impressive versatility.

A Los Angeles transplant originally hailing from the central California city of Fresno, Abels' free-spirited personality has helped give him a reputation as a drummer who'll play just about anything. His initial claim to fame was with hot ska outfit Hepcat, which he joined in 1997. Years of touring with the group, plus the recording of two essential albums—*Right On Time* in 1998 and *Push & Shove* in 2000—further shaped his performance style.

Abels credits a sizeable portion of his ska chops to his fierce, self-imposed indoctrination in the genre. "I'm a really roots-oriented drummer," he says. "Whether it's roots-rock, soul, reggae, or ska, when I discover new music, I always look to the roots of that style and try to vacuum it up. I really studied the whole Jamaican thing when I was with Hepcat. That's all I listened to for three and a half years, every day, all day long."

Equally inspired by classic jazz, blues, and reggae drummers, Abels even went so far as to mimic one of his favorites' cymbal setup during his period with Hepcat. "I used two ride cymbals, and that was it," he states. "Part of the reason for that was Lloyd Knibb, the Skatalites' drummer who was a big influence on that music. One of his favorite drummers was Art Blakey—also one of my favorites. And there was a period where Blakey only used two ride cymbals. Doing that in Hepcat was interesting. You can crash a ride a little bit, you can crash it a lot, or you can lay a bomb on it, and that's how Lloyd Knibb played. That worked great for Hepcat."



Gigs

Lars Frederiksen & The Bastards

•

Hepcat

•

Cypress Hill

•

Pusher

•

Vonda Shepard

In 2003, Abels landed a new gig, one that was decidedly different from any of his past experiences. He became the touring drummer for smooth-jazz vocalist Vonda Shepard, best known for her performances on the Fox television series *Ally McBeal*. "A friend of mine told me about the audition," Abels says. "I didn't have anything going on, so I went to the audition. Vonda liked what I did, and the next thing you know, I was touring Hong Kong and Singapore with her."

The gig was certainly an eye-opening experience for Abels, who had to adhere to Shepard's meticulousness for tempo. "It's definitely a lot different from anything else I've done," he admits. "And it was also a good challenge. I had to learn a crazy amount of tunes on short notice."

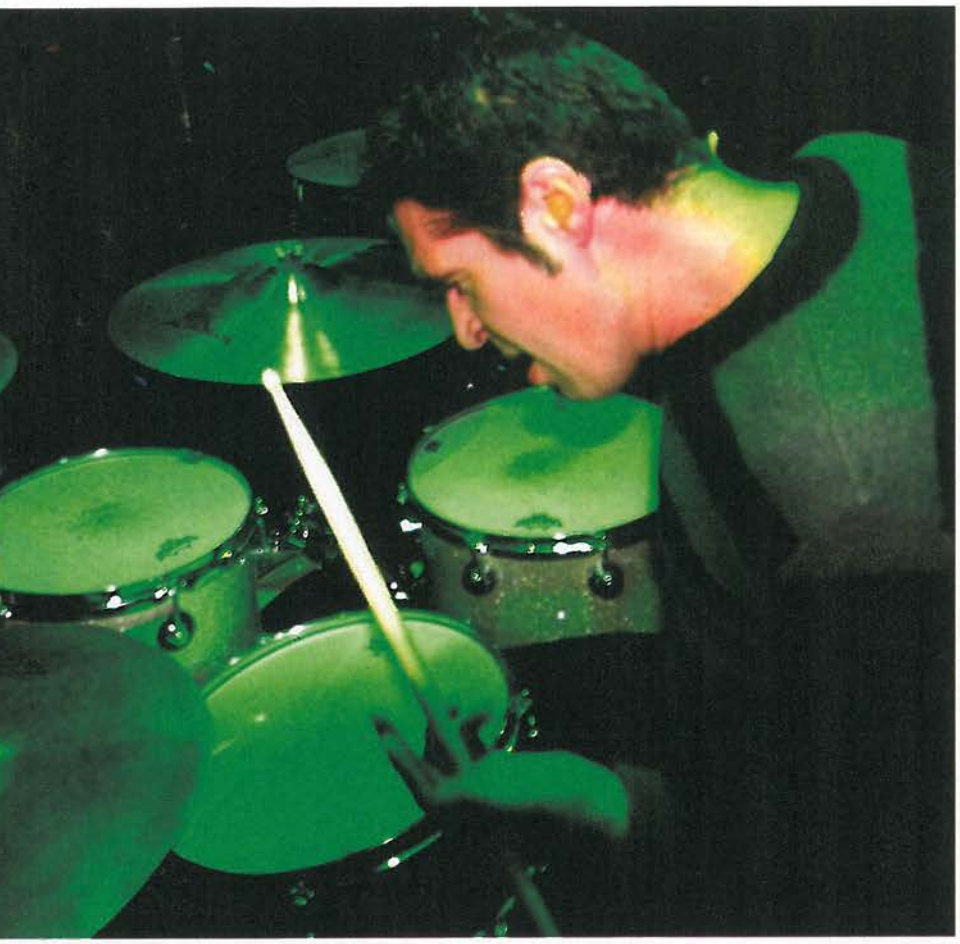
Abels' current gig is with Rancid guitarist Lars Frederiksen's solo punk outfit, The Bastards. Though Abels had joined the group in 1998 with years of experience already on his résumé, the high-octane ensemble was actually his first opportunity to perform in a punk rock band.

Connecting with Rancid on tour as an opening act while playing in Hepcat, Abels established a rapport with Frederiksen, who asked Abels to join his band and play drums on their debut album. According to Abels, the rapid pace of that session was quite an eye-opener. "I showed up, we got some tones on the drums, and Lars showed us the first song," Abels recalls of his first studio

encounter with The Bastards. "We just jammed it out one time and then recorded it. We were done tracking in two days."

Abels has most recently appeared on Lars Frederiksen & The Bastards' 2004 release, *Viking* (Hepcat/Epitaph Records), where he's credited on drums as "Skatty Punk Rock." The sixteen-track disc is a fury of classic punk anthems, deftly propelled by Abels. Of course, his time served on the grueling, summertime punk rock boot camp better known as the Warped Tour certainly helped develop his chops—especially in one brand-new and surprising way.

Due to a sudden injury just before the



"People were tripping out on me [for using traditional grip] on the Warped Tour. But it feels good, looks cool, and no one's using it."

So, You Wanna Be A Rock 'N' Roll Star?
The Rainflorist
Bill Miller
The Rainflorist
Bill
As editor in chief of the most respected drum magazine in the world, Bill Miller has seen some pretty unusual stunts over the years from players looking for coverage. There was that skywriting incident in '91. And then the guy who had plastic surgery to look just like Neil Peart. (Very creepy.) Yup, some people will do anything to be in MD. Honestly, though, with the thought of appearing before the most knowledgeable, dedicated readership in the business, can you really blame them?
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Oh, and who could forget that time the Radio City Rockettes showed up, high-kicking as a young woman played "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" from the back of a flatbed truck?

recording of *Viking*, Abels was forced to switch from matched grip to traditional. It's uncommon to find punk rock drummers playing that way, but it's something that Scott has gotten used to after retraining himself to incorporate that Stewart Copeland–esque left-hand whip motion. "People were tripping out on me on the Warped Tour," he laughs.

But how did the injury happen? "We were preparing to record *Viking*," Abels says, "and I think I didn't warm up or something, but my finger was swollen on my left hand. The next day, when I went back in to rehearse, I hit like four rimshots and I was in excruciating pain. So I realized right then, 'Well, it doesn't hurt when I play traditional grip.' We rehearsed for four days and then went into the studio, and I ended up recording the whole record using traditional grip, and I just kept doing it. It feels good, looks cool, and no one's using it."

Ready, Willing, And Abels

Artist	Album
Lars Frederiksen & The Bastards	Viking
Lars Frederiksen & The Bastards	Campbell, CA
Hepcat	Push & Shove
Hepcat	Right On Time
Cypress Hill	Till Death Do Us Part
Cypress Hill	Stoned Raiders
Muggs	Dust
Depeche Mode	"Free Love" remix
Vanity 5	Give 'Em The Boot 2
Pusher	Problems
The Lance Carlos Quarter	Burned Out
Let's Go Bowling	Pinstripe Suit

A self-described "vintage guy," Abels has used many different setups—maybe even rivaling the number of projects he's been involved with. "I played an old set of Camcos with The Bastards a few years ago," he recalls. "But I've been using mismatched drums for a few years now. When I was with Vonda, all of the drums were different."

That all changed after a little nudging by Frederiksen. "I showed up in the studio for the recent recording with The Bastards with a Gretsch bass drum, a Camco floor tom, and a DW rack tom, and Lars asked, 'Where's your Camco kit?' I said, 'Oh, I sold it!' He was like, 'Well, we've gotta get you a real kit.'" Abels now sports a new setup featuring DW drums and Zildjian cymbals.

Abels adapts his kit's tuning to whatever current project he happens to be in. For the traditional ska of Hepcat, he had used a full-frontal bass drum head on a vintage Gretsch kit with "really bouncy, '60s, wide-open toms." On his recent stint with The Bastards, he had to tune things a little more rock-ish. Still, Abels decided to maintain at least one signature characteristic from his earlier days with Hepcat. "I actually tune the toms up higher than most drummers," Scott says, "especially the guys I noticed on the Warped Tour. It's kind of my thing."

It's interesting to note that while most young rock drummers subscribe to the school of "faster, harder, louder" during their initial startup, Abels has almost done the opposite, alluding to the fact that he began by picking up whatever opportunities were afforded him. "I just go where the wind blows me," he says. "You can't pin me down. I've played everything and I've never limited myself. And if I've had to, I've learned a band's material on the fly. I'm always up for a challenge."

Speaking of challenges, Abels fully realizes that his current gig is just that. "With The Bastards, we do the first five songs in a row without stopping," he says of the band's live set. "Then we take a break and do the four fastest songs in a row without stopping. I wear a bandana when I play with the band, because I sweat so much, I can't see if I don't wear something on my head.

"This punk rock thing's kicking my ass," Scott continues. "It's hard. I'm thirty-four and this music is very physical. I've gotta stay in shape. But I'm actually doing a lot better with it than I thought."

As for wish-list gigs Abels would like to land, the multi-faceted drummer notes he'd "love to play with someone like Lenny Kravitz, who's balls-to-the-wall rock, but who also has the soul and funk element, you know?" Coming from someone who isn't afraid to cross genres, Abels' response isn't surprising at all.

From The Woods And The Water

Craviotto Custom Shop And Abalone Snare Drums

The Craviotto Custom Shop has been created to provide a wider range of solid-shell snare drums than is currently available in the company's Limited Edition series. Buyers will be able to choose from an extensive selection of woods, dimensions, finishes, and drum hardware. They'll also consult directly with Johnny Craviotto while the drum is in production. Prices will vary according to the options selected.

Also new from Craviotto are drums with genuine Abalone drum finishes, created in conjunction with Bill Cardwell of C&C Drums. Limited quantities of 5½x14 and 6½x14 maple solid-shell Craviotto Abalone drums will be available with a choice of Paua Blackheart (Peacock), White Mosaic (White Marine Pearl), and Black Mosaic (Black Diamond) "Deluxe" finishes, and Orange Sunburst over White Awabi "Two-Tone" finish. Retail prices are $2,195 (Deluxe) and $2,295 (Two-Tone) for 5½x14 models, and $2,395 (Deluxe) and $2,495 (Two-Tone) for 6½x14 models.

(831) 763-0855, www.craviottodrums.com.

Craviotto Custom Shop drums

Abalone Finish drums

Crash! Chick! Thwock!

New Meinl Raker Heavy Crash And Hi-Hat Cymbals And Low Percussion Blocks

Meinl's Raker series has been augmented with 19" ($265) and 20" ($285) heavy crashes, as well as 15" heavy ($360) and heavy Soundwave ($400) hi-hats. The heavy crashes are claimed to have a cutting, explosive sound for use in loud situations. The heavy hi-hats are said to require "a powerful playing style to unfold their full sound potential." Raker cymbals are made of B8 bronze and feature computerized hammering for sound consistency and quality.

On the percussion side, Meinl now offers low-pitch percussion blocks made of high-quality PE plastic. They're equipped with a strong mounting clamp that can be positioned on any conventional L-rod. Blocks are available in red or black, at a list price of $49.

(615) 227-5090, www.meinlcymbals.com, www.meinlpercussion.com.

Heavy, Baby

DW Titanium Metal Snare Drums And Private Reserve Drumkit Finishes

Drum Workshop has added titanium to its Collector's Series metal snare drum options. The 6½x14 shell is rolled from pure titanium and includes precisely machined bearing edges to accommodate its custom 42-strand wires. The exterior is polished to a mirror-like sheen, while the inside surface is left in its natural state to take advantage of the dark, warm sonic quality that titanium is said to provide. Drums also feature die-cast hoops, mini-turret/tube lugs, a new swivel all-chrome cast throw-off, and a velvet-lined protective bag. Retail price is $1,895.

In the latest addition to DW's Private Reserve Series of Exotics drumkit finishes, fewer than a hundred sets will be crafted from a highly figured Western Curly Maple log. The finish may be ordered in conjunction with any of DW's available drum sizes and shell options, including all-maple or all-birch shells, VLT (Vertical Low Timbre) models, ESE (Enhanced Sound Edge) bearing edges, and 3-ply reinforcement hoops. Chrome, Satin Chrome, Black Chrome, and 24k Gold drum hardware choices are available to complement the Exotic Quilted Maple's high-end appearance. Prices will vary depending on exact finish, sizes, and configuration.

(805) 485-6999, www.dwdrums.com.

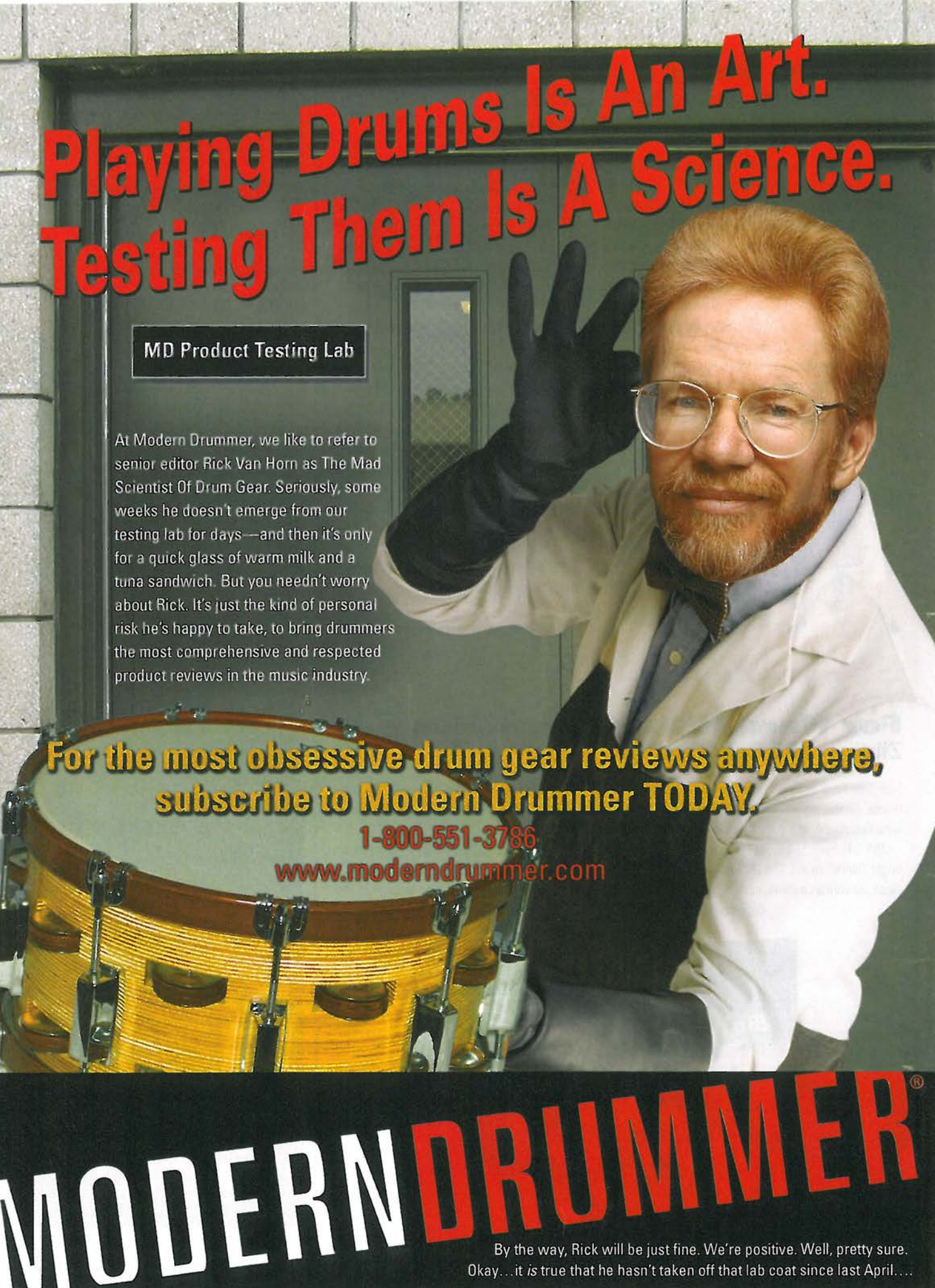
For Hard Hitters On A Budget

Zildjian ZBT Rock Cymbals

Four new Rock models and a Rock Box Set have been added to Zildjian's recently revamped ZBT sheet bronze cymbal series. The ZBT Rock models are said to be capable of cutting through today's heavily amplified music, at a price that won't break the bank.

ZBT 14" Rock hi-hats ($160) are said to offer dynamic power and projection, with a pronounced, bright "chick" sound. The 20" Rock ride ($148) is designed to project a cleanly defined ping with minimal wash, as well as a clean, cutting bell sound. The 16" ($104) and 18" ($121) Rock crashes are said to produce precise punctuation within the most dynamic of music. The cymbals can be purchased separately or in a factory-recommended box set (14" hats, 16" crash, 20" ride, with cymbal bag) priced at $371.

(781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com.


Playing Drums Is An Art.
Testing Them Is A Science.
MD Product Testing Lab
At Modern Drummer, we like to refer to senior editor Rick Van Horn as The Mad Scientist Of Drum Gear. Seriously, some weeks he doesn't emerge from our testing lab for days—and then it's only for a quick glass of warm milk and a tuna sandwich. But you needn't worry about Rick. It's just the kind of personal risk he's happy to take, to bring drummers the most comprehensive and respected product reviews in the music industry.
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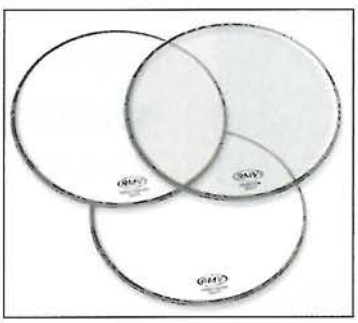
By the way, Rick will be just fine. We're positive. Well, pretty sure. Okay...it *is* true that he hasn't taken off that lab coat since last April....

Anatomically Correct

RMV Purpleheart Drumsets And Sonically Optimized Heads

RMV's Limited Edition Purpleheart Exotic Drumsets feature Sonically-Optimized 4-mm shells made from cross-grained plies of purpleheart. Kits will be offered in four- to seven-piece configurations, with and without hardware. Drums feature low-mass lugs, a choice of black or chrome hardware, optimized bearing edges, and RMV drumheads. Prices for complete drumsets range from $2,399 to $3,199; shell-packs list from $1,799 to $2,999. Only a hundred sets will be crafted for the entire North American market.



Also new from RMV is a wide range of premium-quality drumheads made from Mylar films securely mounted in crimped aluminum hoops and reinforced with steel insert rings. The heads also include precisely formed collars that allow the surface of the head to rest squarely and evenly on the drums' bearing edge. A full selection of single- and double-ply coated, clear, and opaque models are available for snares, bass drums, and toms.

(720) 839-4874, www.rmvdrums.com.

Save The Cows!

Remo Tucked FiberSkyn 3 Conga And Bongo Heads And NuSkyn Symphonic Bass Drum Heads

Remo has expanded its tucked synthetic drumhead offerings with new tucked FiberSkyn 3 conga and bongo drumheads. The original glue-channel FiberSkyn 3 head offers high overtones and exceptional projection. The tucked FiberSkyn 3 head is said to retain all of the original tone qualities, with the added durability provided by Remo's patented tucked construction.

NuSkyn Symphonic bass drum head

New to Remo's symphonic line are NuSkyn bass drum heads. Unlike the bright, cutting sound of FiberSkyn 3 heads, NuSkyn heads are said to produce warm, spacious tones, with unmatched tonal depth and complexity. NuSkyn symphonic bass heads feature a rich, dark sound spectrum, even when played with a wooden mallet. Available sizes are 28", 30", 32", 36", and 40".

(661) 294-5600, www.remo.com.

Tucked FiberSkyn 3 conga head

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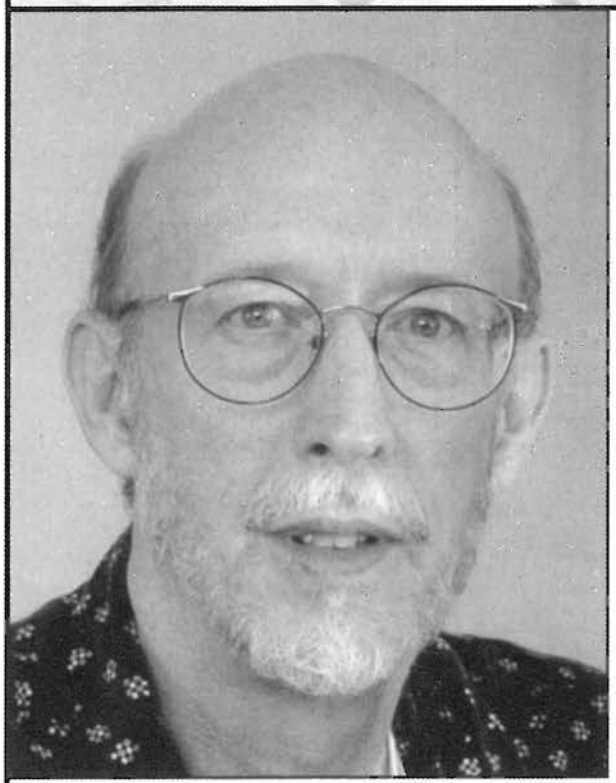
Advanced Design = Advanced Performance



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Bay Area Jazz Legend / Author and Teacher

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With these heads, my drums sound richer and fuller with true projection at any volume level.

For me there is no other choice.

Take the "Tap Test™" and you will see what I mean.

George Marsh

REMEMBER

"If the head doesn't sound good when you tap it, it won't sound good when you play it!"

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e-mail: info@aquariandrumheads.com
www.aquariandrumheads.com

Tote 'Em For Less

Beato Pro 3 And Pro 4 Drum Bags

Beato Pro 3 and Pro 4 bags are the first entry-level bags created by noted bag designer Fred Beato. Heavy-duty Pro 3 Cordura bags are padded to protect their contents. Each bag comes with a shoulder strap, two side handles, heavy-duty zippers, and a separate compartment for accessories. Pro 3 stick bags can hold a large supply of drumsticks, brushes, and mallets. Retail prices include $179.95 for the Pro 3 Fusion set and $185 for the Standard set. (Individual drum bags are also available.) Pro 3 stick bags (in three sizes) are priced from $9 to $12; Pro 3 cymbal bags (in two models) are $28.95 and $54.95; Pro 3 hardware bags with wheels (in three sizes) are priced from $65.25 to $79.75.

Pro 4 economy bags are available in five-piece Standard and Fusion sets. They're made of a strong, water-repellant nylon material using extra-heavy thread. The insides feature soft, scratch-resistant material. Each bag has a heavy-duty zipper. The Pro 4 Fusion set is priced at $48.95; the Pro 4 Standard set sells for $49.95.

(800) 282-0110, www.universalpercussion.com.

Pro 4 bass drum bag

Pro 3 bags

Something Old, Something New...

San Francisco Drum Company Civic Center Drums

San Francisco Drum Company's Civic Center line of thin-shell drums combines modern construction (like computer machined tube lugs) with classic design and hand-finishing inside and out. Inspired by the drums used in the 1920s and '30s, the thin maple ply-shell design (with reinforcing rings) is said to deliver a warm, resonant sound with rich overtones. Classic large-diameter bass drums, snare drums, and custom kit add-on configurations are offered "for the drummer who wants the early-days style with modern workmanship and components."

Standard finishes include antique oil, classic wrap, and authentic piano finish. Bass drums start at $1,795, snare drums start at $1,095. A typical four-piece kit configuration starts at $4,780.

(415) 286-6758, www.sfdrumco.com.

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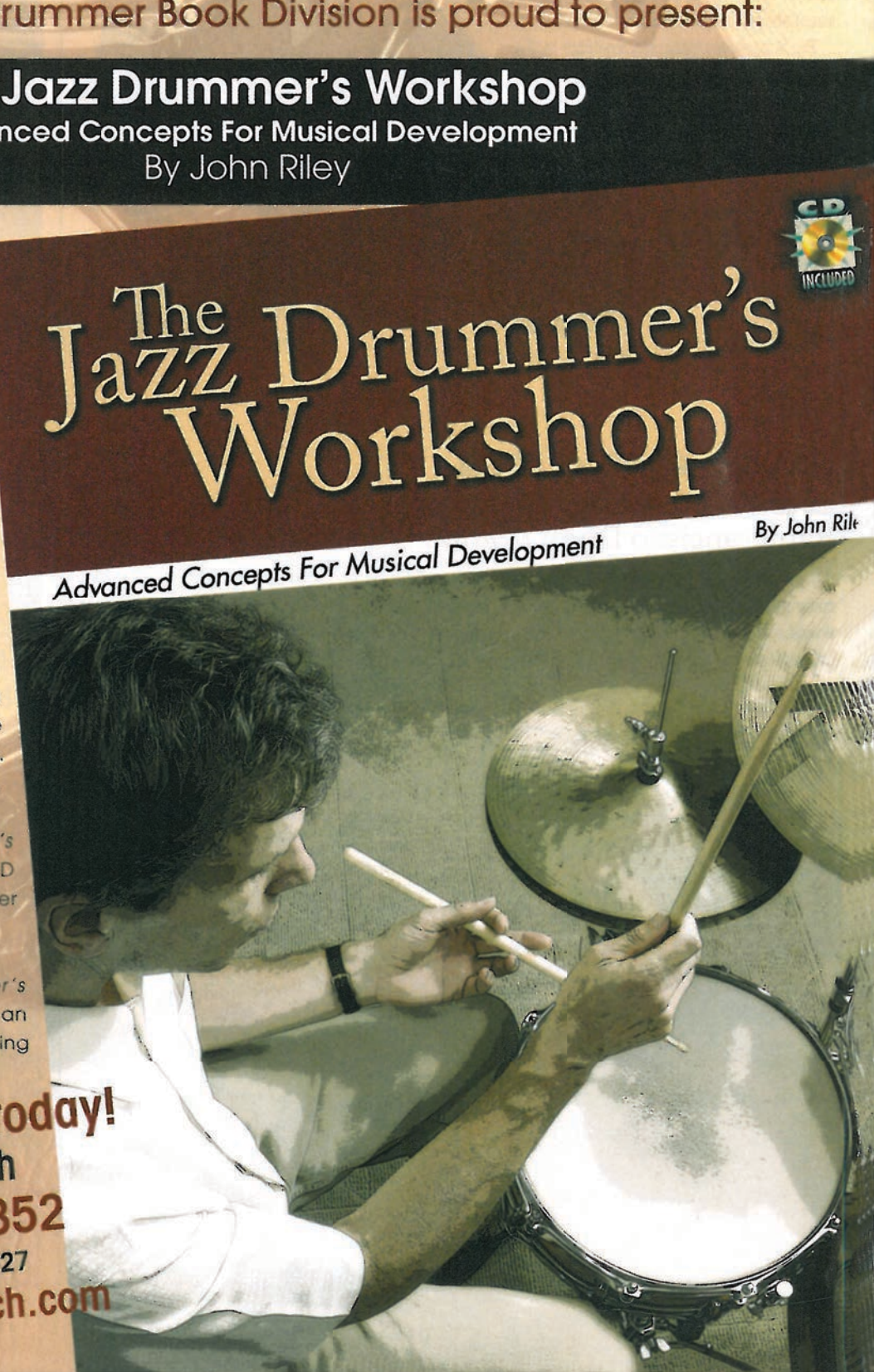

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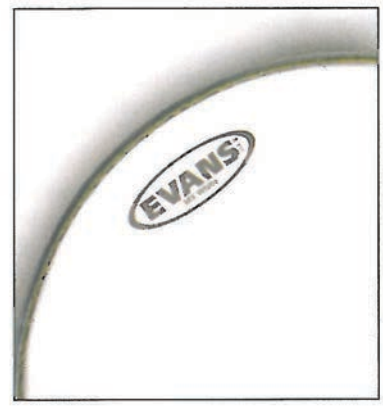
Hup! Two, Three, Four...

Evans MX White Marching Snare And Tenor Batters



Evans' new MX White head is said to produce a soft feel and a rich, edgy tone with great projection and articulation. Its "thin-weave" Aramid fiber-and-polyester construction is designed to deliver durability and playability previously unattainable in marching applications. The bright, white playing surface should help any snare line look neat and professional.

Evans MX White Tenor heads are made from two plies of 7.5-mil, smooth white polyester film for an outstanding balance of attack, sustain, and decay. A new reinforced hoop, coupled with the film's extreme stretch-resistance, is said to make the head nearly maintenance-free. List prices range from $23 to $32.

(800) 323-2746, www.evansdrumheads.com.

Rock Power, Artsy Looks

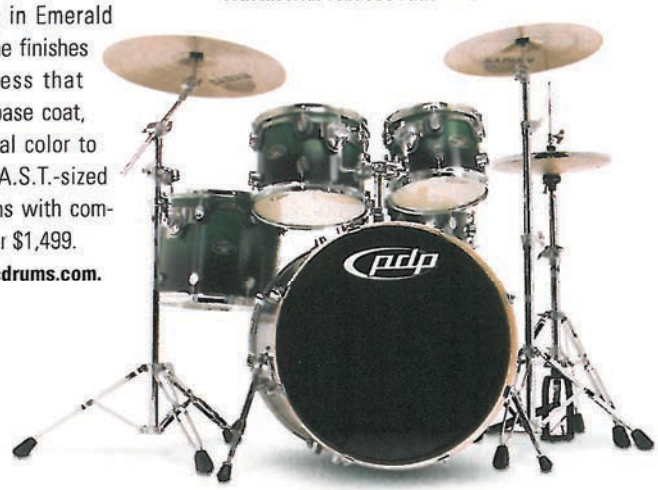
Pacific FXR Birch Kits And New MX Fade Finishes

Pacific's FXR kits feature all-birch shells said to provide plenty of high-end articulation to cut through at loud volumes. Professional features include S.T.M. suspension tom mounts, True Pitch tension rods, Remo heads, and Pacific's signature oval lug. Four-piece kits come with a 9x12 rack tom, a 14x16 floor tom on legs, an 18x22 bass drum, a matching 6x14 snare drum, and a complete hardware pack. Kits are offered in Cherry and Tobacco Fade lacquer finishes at $1,499. Add-on toms in 8x10 ($209) and 12x14 ($295) sizes are also available.

FXR kit with Tobacco Fade finish

Pacific's MX Series maple drums are now available in Emerald Fade and Tobacco Fade. The finishes involve a two-part process that includes hand-applying a base coat, then spraying an additional color to create the fade effect. F.A.S.T.-sized five-piece kit configurations with complete hardware packs list for $1,499.

(805) 485-6999, www.pacificdrums.com.



MX kit with Emerald Fade finish

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Buy 3 pairs of the number 1 selling stick in the world, Vic Firth's American Classic® 5A and receive Tommy Igoe's *Groove Essentials* sampler DVD FREE! It contains five of the grooves allowing you to listen and then play along. Play the same sticks as Tommy Igoe and learn the essential grooves from one of the world's most respected drummers!

VIC FIRTH

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And What's More

LUKA PERCUSSION crafts their drums from kiln-dried Canadian rock maple logs that are lathed into cylindrical tubes. These tubes become seamless one-piece drumshells. Snare drum shells are available from as thick as 2" to as thin as ¼", with an integrated reinforcing hoop cut into the shell itself. Street prices start at around $700. Complete drumkits are also available.

Djembes are created by the same method, but use ash for its low end and aggressive, dry slap. Drums are fitted with hand-picked Canadian goatskin heads and climbing-grade rope. A laser-cut hook-tensioned model is also available.

(514) 295-1981, www.LuKaPercussion.com.

PRO-MARK BS10 and BS12 rock maple bass sticks are designed to create articulate sound on marching bass drums, primarily for indoor use. Both models share the same sculpted grip, shaft diameter, and 14½" length. But the BS-12 has a larger head for added volume and depth. Retail price for both models is $21.95.

Pro-Mark also offers Groove Juice Jr., a spray-on/wipe-off cleaner for entry-level cymbals. According to the manufacturer it will not discolor the metal or remove the finish. List price is $9.95 per bottle.

(877) PRO-MARK, www.promark.com.

PROGRESSIVE PERCUSSION DRUM STUDIOS has announced the formation of 2nd Skin Designs. The company states that they can provide digitally printed graphics on quality materials to cover any drumset. They can also die-cut band logos or lettering for bass drum heads, design graphics from scratch, or reproduce any existing graphic. Pricing starts at $299 for a custom design on a standard five-piece kit.

(919) 787-1688, www.ppdsonline.com.

CODA's new line of hand percussion includes conga drums, bongos, djembes, timbales, tambourines, cowbells, and stands. The congas, bongos, and djembes feature synthetic heads for rich tone and resistance to temperature changes. Their oak bodies are said to provide a more traditional sound than fiberglass models. The drums also feature Contour Rhythm rims, making them easier to play for longer periods.

(415) 570-0970, www.codadrums.com.

DANMAR's single and double pedal impact pads now feature a variety of graphic designs by Eminent Grafix. The pads have been used by top drummers on hundreds of hit recordings and major tours since 1970.

(949) 756-8481, www.danmarpercussion.com.

The most popular drumset configurations in **TAYE**'s mid-range ProX series are now available with a classic Silver Sparkle laminate finish. No price increase is anticipated for the new finish.

(909) 628-9589, www.tayedrums.com.

HARDCASE molded plastic cases are now available in red, green, and blue. The weatherproof cases feature a vented design, foam padding, comfortable carrying handles, black webbing, heavy-duty quick-lock clips, and a lifetime warranty.

(011) 44 (0) 1246 451234, www.hardcase.com.

ZILDJIAN's Artist Collection now includes Travis Barker and Adrian Young cymbal bags. Travis's bag features a black & white checkerboard pattern with a red and white "bull's-eye," a rubberized Zildjian logo patch, and Travis's "ransom note" logo, a hi-hat pocket and a drumstick pouch on the front, and three zippered accessory pockets.

Adrian's bag features a bright plaid pattern, reflective piping, a large screened Adrian logo in red on the back, and rubberized red and black Adrian Young logo patches. The bag also has a hi-hat pocket and a drumstick pouch.

Each bag features cymbal dividers, padded nylon construction, a reinforced bottom, an adjustable shoulder strap, a carrying handle, and tough metal zippers with Zildjian logo pulls. List price for each bag is $89.95.

(781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com.

MAYER BROS., known for custom-crafted wood drums, has added a new line of metal-shell snare drums available in brass, copper, and aluminum. Sizes range from 4" through 6½" in depth by 14" in diameter. All snares are equipped with MBD solid lugs, Aquarian drumheads, and Trick GS007 strainers.

(310) 649-5271, www.mbdrums.com.

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One of the few truly hand-made drum ranges in the world today, the new Premier Series combines over 8 decades of drum-making experience with the latest design innovations uniting the very best of the past with a vision of the future. Radical new tension casings boasting individual style and vintage inspired pewter badges create a bold new look that truly stands out from the crowd. New features include sleek new insulated die-cast claw hooks and newly engineered tom brackets with hideaway memory lock. Maple, Birch or our hybrid Gen-X woods, traditional or classic shell construction, cool wraps, classic satins, premium lacquers and legendary high gloss sparkles... the choices are endless, and Premier's world famous chrome plating is still the standard by which all others are judged. Experience the new Premier Series drums at these fine drum stores.

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Denver
303-756-5777

Resurrection Drums, FL
Pembroke Park
954-457-9020

House of Drums, FL
N. Ft. Meyers
239-997-3006

A J's Pro Percussion, FL
www.ajpropercussion.com
800-545-7668

Atlanta Pro Percussion, GA
www.atlantapropercussion.com
800-USA-DRUM

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www.beautifulmusicdg.com
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Jack's Drum Shop, MA
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www.music123.com
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Full-color bass drum heads custom made with your photos, logos, digital files. Or choose an image from our catalog. **Www.VividHeads.com.**

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You need: **Drumfarm** vintage drum list. Bobby Chiasson's Jollity Drum Farm, 420 Coach Road, Argyle, NY 12809. Tel: (518) 638-8559, www.drumfarm.com.

The Ludwig Book! by Rob Cook. Business history and dating guide, 300 pages (64 color), Wm. F. Ludwig II autobiography, books on Rogers, Leedy, Slingerland, calfskin heads, gut snares, and more. Contact Rebeats, tel: (989) 463-4757, Rob@rebeats.com, Web site: www.rebeats.com.

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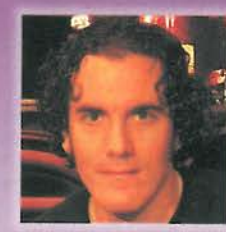

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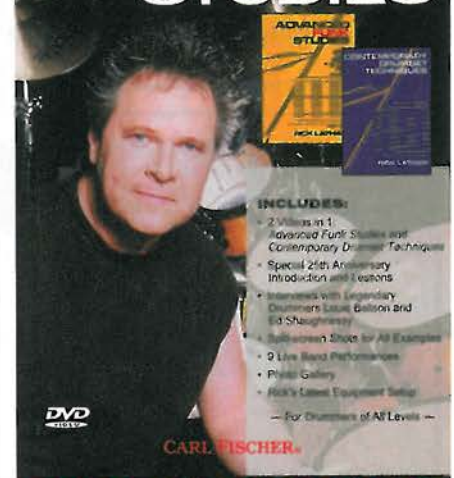

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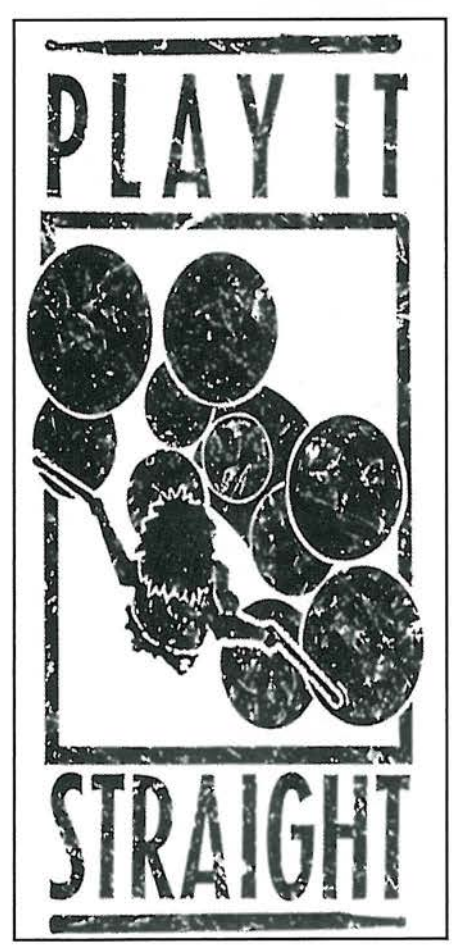

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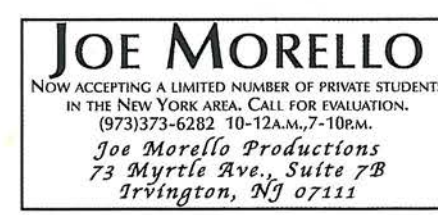


RECORDINGS

rating scale poor classic

Zach Hill & The Holy Smokes

Masculine Drugs (Suicide Squeeze) ★★★½

Chaos music-theory. Needles pinned. Robotic voices. *Musique concrète* interludes. Drums ultra-compressed as if to say, "We're playing so hard, no microphone can contain us!" **ZACH HILL** is the most intense drummer you've likely not heard, all jack-hammer hand-foot combinations, but played like an android from the future. The man-machine angle shouldn't be overdone, though, which is made clear by the book part of this unusual package, *Destroying Yourself Is Too Accessible*. Abstract impressionist line drawings accompany Hill's strangely humane narrative, subtitled "Old Children's Ramblings For The New And Improved Child And Hypocritically Desterous Hippy," which, um, actually begins to make sense after a while. Just like the highly unusual music on the CD. (www.suicidesqueeze.net) **Adam Budofsky**

Art Of The Improvisers by Michael Dawson

Rudresh Mahanthappa, Jason Moran, Satoko Fujii

Altoist/composer Rudresh Mahanthappa's edgy tone screams throughout *Mother Tongue*, as drummer **ELLIOT HUMBERTO KAVEE** coaxes and jolts each piece through dynamic peaks and valleys. Kavee's frenetic, angular phrasing quickly shifts between duple and triple subdivisions, rarely settling for more than a bar at a time. Combining a unique drum sound with an adventurous style that's as akin to Cobham and Trilok as Roy and Max, Kavee is on the brink. (Pi Recordings)

Pianist Jason Moran's *Same Mother* is equally kaleidoscopic, blending and blurring traditional jazz and gutbucket blues with complex avant-garde improvisations. Drummer **NASHEET WAITS** simultaneously embraces and challenges the jazz drumming standard as he morphs between rolling shuffles and unpredictable free-form excursions. (Blue Note)

Reaching further outside, The Satoko Fujii Trio's ear-challenging *Illusion Suite* swirls in and out of various moods and textures from the serene to the chaotic. Abstract percussion maestro **JIM BLACK** explores every inch of his eccentric collection of drums, cymbals, rattles, and gongs, occasionally offsetting his dense rhythmic excursions with a quirky breakbeat or tribal-tinged groove. (Libra Records)

John Robinson

Funkshui (HomeCourt Records) ★★★½

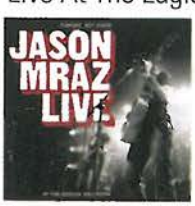
LA session drummer **JOHN "JR" ROBINSON** has laid down his smooth-in-the-pocket groove for *so* many top-selling artists. Throughout his solo debut, *Funkshui*, John produces, writes, plays keyboards and guitar, sings—and even raps a little. (Percussionist **DANNY REYES** appears on several tracks.) Thankfully, *Funkshui* is not just a drummer's CD; it's music you can enjoy without necessarily analyzing. But don't worry, drumming fans, John slams on a couple of tracks, notably the opening track, "Flight 81." (www.johnjrrobinson.com) **Billy Amendola**

Jimmy Chamberlin Complex

Life Begins Again (Sanctuary) ★★★★

From heavy to light, dense to airy, straight up to off kilter, **JIMMY CHAMBERLIN** gets a well-rounded workout on his beautifully crafted solo debut. One of the only signs that *Life Begins Again* is a drummer's solo album is that Chamberlin's rich-toned kit is mixed up front. The former Smashing Pumpkins timekeeper largely bypasses alt rock here, instead sharing the love he and writing partner **Billy Mohler** have for fusion and British prog. On several of the more psychedelic adventures, Jimmy's hi-hat foot pumps away furiously as his other limbs do a restless, playful dance across the rest of his set. Inspired stuff. **Michael Parillo**

Jason Mraz Tonight, Not Again—Live At The Eagles Ballroom (Elektra) ★★★



Jason Mraz is a charismatic natural with a great voice. His poetic groove pop is warm, flowing, and captivating on this live CD/DVD set. From the opening track, it's hard not to like him. **ADAM KING**'s drums interlock with the percussion, and together they create a subtle, supportive, lightly grooving pocket for Mraz to soar over. The group excels in this live setting, playing with more verve and less sugar than on their studio recordings. It would be fun to hear the band really cut loose, but their dedication and focus on the songs is admirable. **Martin Patmos**

Bunny Brunel

L.A. Zoo Revisited (independent)

This re-recorded, remixed version of Brunel's 1998 instrumental fusion recording, which featured a notable John Wackerman on electronic drums, is taken to even greater heights with **VIRGIL DONATI**'s over-the-top technique and musicality. Donati takes exciting liberties with the time on several tracks while delivering unique double pedal chops and advanced hand/feet technique to round out an amazing performance. (www.bunnybrunel.com)

Mike Haid

Soul Asylum After The Flood: Live From The Grand Forks Prom (Legacy)

While *After The Flood* is a testament to then-drummer **STERLING CAMPBELL**'s impressive rock 'n' roll chops (check out his exceptional work with Duran Duran and David Bowie for different sides of his playing), its song selection is ultimately a little frustrating. Recorded in 1998 at a prom in flood-ravaged South Dakota, *ATF* finds Soul Asylum sticking almost exclusively to '90s MOR material ("Runaway Train," "Black Gold") and ignoring the more raucous songs of its pre-platinum catalog—especially disappointing for a band that, in its prime, was one of the best live acts around.

Jon Wurster

Rick Stone Samba de Novembro (Jazzand)

Rick Stone's warm guitar tone establishes a relaxed and effortless vibe that permeates throughout *Samba De Novembro*, even when stepping just outside of the box. At times the quartet threatens to boil over, but always settles down to a level of simmering restraint. Throughout the disc **MATT WILSON** plays with impeccable touch, taste, and musicality, with just enough of the quirky creative slant that has made him unique. His solo on "Duck, Duck, Blues!", reminiscent of Max Roach, is deeply melodic, while on "Rain Forest" he paints an impressionistic picture with a palette of shakers, cymbal swells, and various percussive effects.

Michael Dawson

Scum Of The Earth Blah... Blah... Blah... Love Songs For The New Millennium (Eclipse)

After putting in six years of service with Rob Zombie, guitarist **Riggs** has produced a solo debut under the moniker Scum Of The Earth. The bombastic, heavy-duty disc features Riggs' signature fuzzed-out guitar riffs, supported by drummer **SEVEN** with appearances by **JOHN TEMPESTA** (Rob Zombie, Helmet) and **JOHN DOLMAYAN** (System Of A Down) on select tracks. "Bloodsukin Freakshow" is an imposing affair boasting flavorful accents by Dolmayan, while the aggressive "Murder Song" blends Seven's wispy, open-hat dance patterns with primitive toms on the pre-chorus. It's overwhelming at times, with a vast array of sonic elements charging from all directions. But such excitement is part of the disc's allure.

Waleed Rashidi

Living Colour Live From CBGB's (Epic/Legacy)

There's a lot to be said for youthful lack of restraint. Rock drummers, especially, "mature" over time—but what's so bad about letting it all hang out? Not a thing, says the rip-roaring Living Colour of 1989. Caught at home in NYC between debut smash *Vivid* and 1990's *Time's Up*, **WILL CALHOUN** and crew hold nothing back. If there's a flam rimshot, giant triplet, or bass drum stutter that can further animate one of his recorded parts, Will adds it here, to great effect. And it's a treat to hear him play material from the gaudily produced *Time's Up* with drums that sound like *drums*.

Michael Parillo

Vanessa Carlton Harmonium (A&M)

If nothing else, credit must go to pianist/singer Vanessa Carlton for breaking away from the plastic world of today's teen-pop stars with her sophomore effort, *Harmonium*. Now, there's still the adolescent lyrics and throaty vocals, but there's also enough songwriting depth, interesting production, and solid drumming to warrant a second listen. While most of the tracks are straightforward, studio monster **ABE LABORIEL JR.** makes his presence known with energetic grooves and a gargantuan drum sound. "Private Radio" is a standout. Even Third Eye Blind's frontman-turned-producer **Stephan Jenkins** offers a surprisingly cool Gadd-inspired groove on "Half A Week Before Winter."

Michael Dawson

Gov't Mule Deja Voodoo (ATO)

Southern rock has been flying under the radar for the past several years. Gov't Mule carries the flag proudly with this gritty collection of catchy guitar-heavy blues-rock led by veteran Allman Brothers guitarist/singer **Warren Haynes**. The band is funky and tight, held together by the musical drumming of **MATT ABTS**, whose forceful simplicity is reminiscent of the great drumming of Bad Co.'s Simon Kirke. It's easy to hear why this rock radio–friendly band could single-handedly stir the South to rise again.

Mike Haid

Jam Camp Black Hills Jam—Preserves v.2 (Flying Spot)

Jam Camp is an instrumental improv band drawing on rock, funk, jazz, blues, and other sources. Each song has a distinct feel and groove, and everyone in the band plays exceptionally, displaying feel, technique, solid musicianship, and creativity within the groovy vibe. **JOEL VEATCH**'s drumming is superb in its support of the group, driving the beat, filling in with little variations and comments, and prodding his bandmates. This is catchy, creative, and very fun music.

Martin Patmos

Beat Box by Ed King

Kanye West

If you've been following Beat Box, you know the presence of "dirty" drums on a hip-hop record is a good thing. Roc-A-Fella Records' newest freshman shows us how to create this effect the old-fashioned way: samples. Scattered across rapper/producer Kanye West's debut, *College Drop Out*, is the presence of an SP 1200, Akai MPC, or some other sampling drum machine belting out popular redesigned drum loops with the perfect amount of compression (or lack thereof). Dry samples, snapping snares, and punchy kicks are necessary ingredients for an album of this type to be a hit with musicians and fans alike. They're all here, making *College Drop Out* a project that programmers *and* drummers should take the time to study.

VIDEOS

Tom Teasley

Global Fusion Percussion

(T&T Music/The Wright Hand Drum Co.)

level: all, $30 (includes study guide pamphlet)

Think you're a hopelessly Westernized drummer? Can't think outside of "2 and 4" on the snare? Fear not, Teasley is here. This video not only introduces us to different world percussion styles (Southern Italian, Brazilian, South Indian, Egyptian, and more), but how we might apply rudiments and other rhythmic patterns to such instruments as tambourine, shaker, doumbek, frame drum, and ultimately the drumkit. In many demonstrations Teasley uses the palm and the side of his hand or his fingers (or only the tips of his fingers) to create varied and resonant sounds on a single instrument. In applying one rhythmic concept, Teasley plays the kit with a stick in his left hand while using his right-hand fingers to punch out notes on an electric keyboard situated at his side. This video challenges you to become not only a more technically adept drummer, but a more creative and even innovative one. Open-minded drummers of all genres and veteran world percussionists looking for a fresh approach should find this a great educational resource. (www.tomteasley.com) **Will Romano**

DVDs

King Crimson Neal And Jack And Me (DGM)

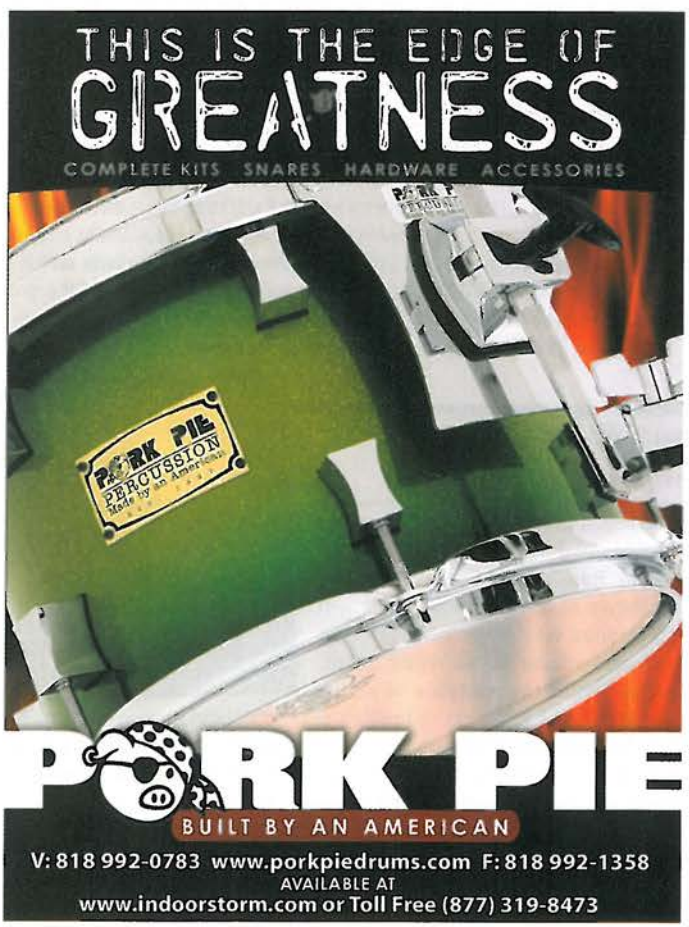
level: all, $19.97

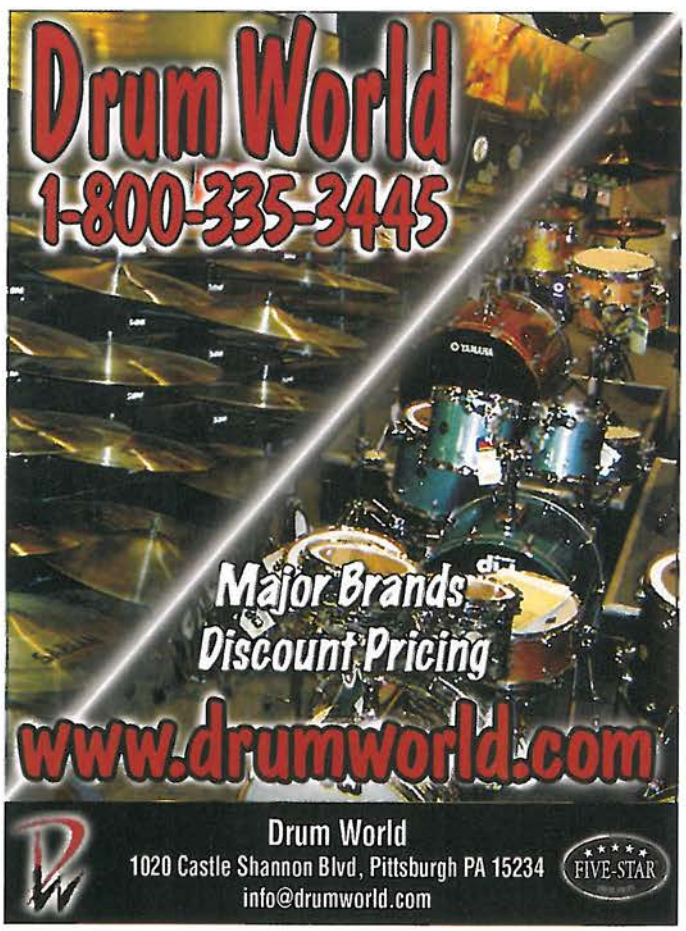
King Crimson was one of a handful of '60s/'70s rock bands that survived the punk revolution with its credibility and sales pull intact. They did this by reinventing, not rehashing like so many of their peers did. African-inspired polyrhythms, new-wave connections, and the monstrous playing of **Robert Fripp, Tony Levin, Adrian Belew,** and **BILL BRUFORD** combined for shocking but always musical statements. *Neal And Jack And Me* comprises two long-unavailable videos: *Three Of A Perfect Pair—Live In Japan 1984* and *The Noise—Live In Frejus 1982.* The music here represents the latter two thirds of the band's Me-Generation trilogy. Bruford's a gas throughout: the relaxed intensity, the famous Simmons sounds, the completely unique patterns, the high concept.... Ignore the hopeless '80s post-production on the '84 show, and be awed by the countless startling moments here. **Adam Budofsky**

Tuning, Tone & Techniques For Punk Rock Drums (MVP)

level: all, $19.99

We know what you're thinking...punk rock technique? In this one-hour video, our host Bill "Stuhlly" Brennenstuhl (John Lee Hooker, Susan Tedeschi) does a great job of presenting exercises and theory in a highly educational and (gasp!) dignified way. While only a small amount of time is relegated to tuning drums (hey, this is a punk video after all), Stuhlly makes up for that by vocalizing, repeatedly demonstrating, and ultimately transforming standard rock beats into blazing punk patterns. Through split-screen camera angles we see precise snare and bass drum beat placement and are instantly clued in to other common techniques like the "slushy hi-hat" and R-L/alternate sticking patterns. Watch and learn the method behind punk's supposed madness. **Will Romano**





The Rhythmic Construction Of The Salsa Tune, Vol. 1

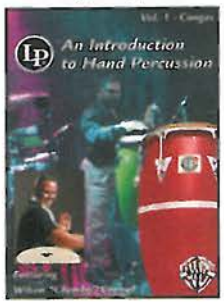
featuring Pablo "Chino" Nunez (LP)

level: beginner, $12.95

Producer/percussionist Pablo "Chino" Nunez offers "a beginner's guide to authentic salsa" that presents more in 36 minutes than most teachers could present in a month. Focusing on four basic Latin styles, Nunez demonstrates (with helpful split-screen video) the key parts for conga, bongo, bell, timbales, and guiro. A simple companion booklet would have been helpful, but all in all this "overview" video demystifies the often intimidating world of Latin percussion. **Bill Kiely**

An Introduction To Hand Percussion, Volume 1: Congas featuring Wilson "Chembo" Corniel (LP)

level: beginner, $12.95



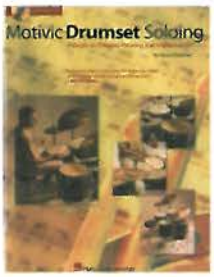
Latin percussionist Wilson "Chembo" Corniel helps beginners understand the basics of playing a conga drum. Included in this 25-minute "less is more" video are details on setting up drums on a stand, tuning congas, playing the four basic tones, and finally playing five essential rhythms. It would be great if LP were to include a one-page written key to reading the five rhythms in musical notation, but in every other way this video puts the new conguero solidly in the know. **Bill Kiely**

BOOKS

Motivic Drumset Soloing

by Terry O'Mahoney (Hal Leonard)

level: intermediate to advanced, $17.95 (with CD)



Drummers have been exploring melodic drum solos for years, but very little has been written on the subject. Sure, you can study Max Roach records—and some would argue that's all you need. But with *Motivic Drumset Soloing*, we now have a method book that explains the various compositional devices that made Roach's and other "melodic" drummers' solos so effective. Concepts such as repetition, fragmentation, and rhythmic displacement are defined, applied to the drumset, and demonstrated on the CD. Other topics include orchestrating the melody, using musical landmarks, and analyzing transcriptions. It's an insightful look into constructing *musical* drum solos. **Michael Dawson**

MD Radio To hear many of the artists reviewed in this month's *Critique*, be sure to tune in to www.moderndrummer.com.

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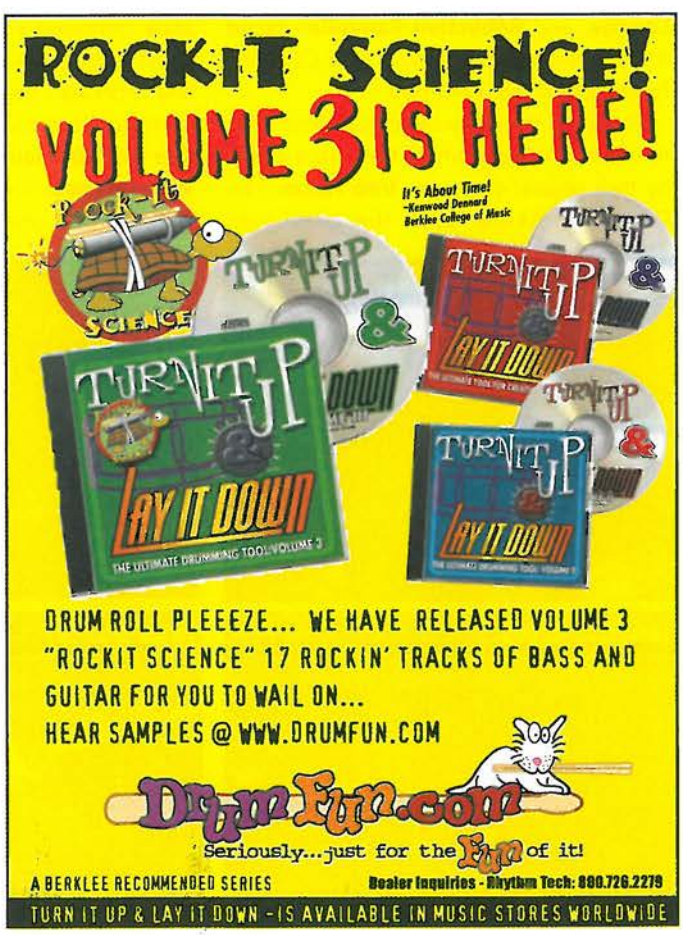


Montreal Drum Fest 2004

Drummers from across Canada, the US, and Europe gathered in Montreal this past November 12–13 for the twelfth annual Montreal Drum Fest. The event was held in Pierre Mercure Hall in downtown Montreal.

Manu Katché

Friday, November 12

The weekend kicked off with a stellar performance by **Manu Katché** and his band, which featured Franck Avitable on keys, Alex Tassel on flugelhorn, and Gildas Boclé on bass. The concert wasn't about bombastic chops, but instead focused on tasty jazz/funk that featured world-beat influences coupled with strong grooves. Manu's performance was highlighted by his signature use of splash cymbals, clever hi-hat patterns, and a particularly nice example of brushwork.

Opening for Manu was an exciting world-percussion ensemble featuring students of (and led by) noted Canadian drummer/percussionist **Luc Boivin**.

Saturday, November 13

Saturday's show kicked off with the now-traditional Yamaha Rising Star showcase, featuring up & coming local drummers. This year, the talented youngsters—**Jimmy Lord**, **Danick Tardif**, **Pascal Lepage**, and **Sébastien Fauvelle**—faced the challenge of performing with Canadian fusion greats Five After Four.

Following the Showcase, Five After Four remained on stage, where they were joined by their regular drummer, **Vito Rezza**. The Canadian master took the band into polyrhythmic territory, laying down full-out grooves and killer fills with the confidence that comes from thirty years of playing with musical greats.

Australia's **Sam Aliano** played to complex, funky tracks. He displayed a muscular style combined with intricate technique on hi-hats, blazing yet tasty double-bass work, and *very* clean, fast hands.

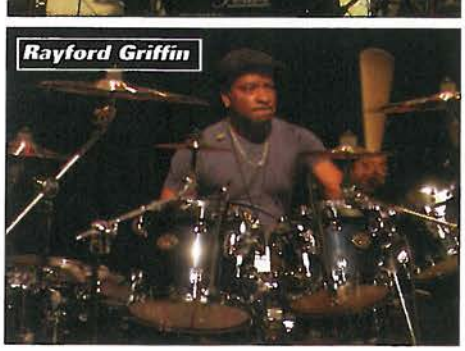
Holland's clown princes of drumming, **The Drumbassadors** (**René Creemers** and **Wim DeVries**) opened with an atmospheric Afro-Beat feel, moving into their trademark super-coordinated syncopations on two drumkits. Their ever-expanding act now includes René as a rap artist and Wim performing on drums along with a vocal harmonizer.

Rayford Griffin combined his unmistakable groove with spectacular fills and total musicality. After playing dynamic and fluid solos, Rayford performed two tracks from his new solo CD. On the second track, he demonstrated how odd-time music can definitely be *funky*.

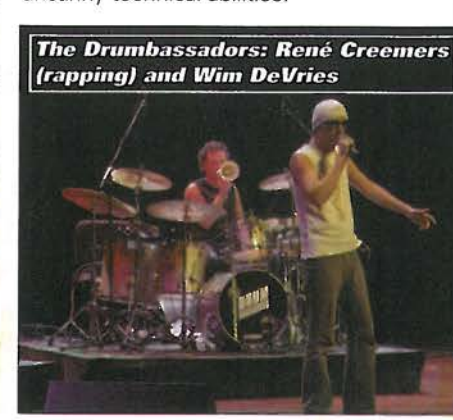
Saturday closed with **Virgil Donati**, who performed on a new setup that features "flying" rack toms. "No tracks...it's just me," he said, before launching into lengthy solos that explored the sound potential of his kit within a framework of polyrhythmic patterns between his hands and feet. Virgil closed with an impromptu Q&A session that led to further demonstrations of his uncanny technical abilities.

Virgil Donati

Vito Rezza


Rayford Griffin

Sam Aliano


The Drumbassadors: René Creemers (rapping) and Wim DeVries

Sunday, November 14

Sunday opened with 2001 *Modern Drummer* Undiscovered Drummer winner **Gustavo Meli**, who has since gone on to become a world-traveling clinician. Dedicating his performance to *MD* founder Ron Spagnardi "for giving me the opportunity to play at shows like this," Gustavo wowed the crowd with dazzling hand- and footwork. At one point he casually grabbed a camera and photographed the crowd—while playing a blistering double-bass pattern.

Serious grooves were the order of the day when Quebec TV and stage drummer **Tony Albino** and his band appeared. On a simplified kit, Tony dug a pocket as deep as the Grand Canyon, with technique to spare.

Nelly Furtado's **Dave Langguth** combined fusion chops—fluid fills, blazing speed, and creative musicality—with a stadium-ready backbeat. Playing with a guitarist, Dave was all about intensity. Audience members were asking each other, "This is a *pop* drummer?"

Things took a left turn when **Thierry Arpino & Essouna** performed. The drummer (currently touring with Jean-Luc Ponty) led the group through esoteric songs that featured a wide range of dynamics and ethnic influences. From delicate to dominant, Thierry covered the stylistic range with aplomb.

Ralph Irrizary & Timbalaye brought Latin fire to chilly Montreal. The dynamic timbalero led his septet through several blazing numbers that featured Latin rhythms combined with unexpected harmonic changes. Ralph added a special touch with a "bass drum" sound created on a deadened RotoTom.

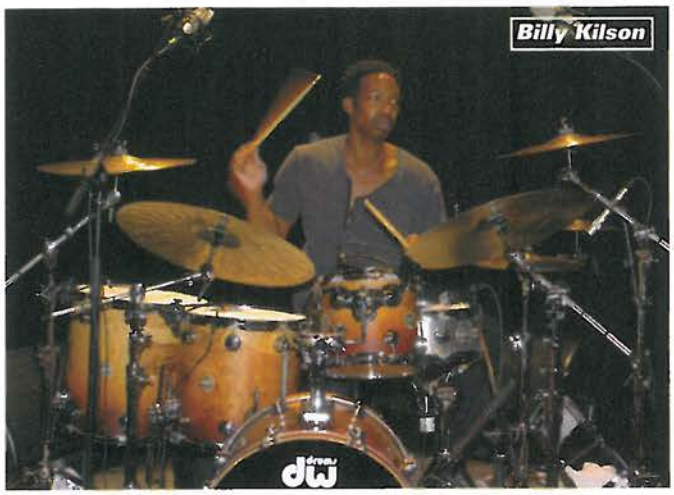
Powerful rock drumming was eminently represented in the person of **Jimmy DeGrasso**. A personable, soft-spoken guy off the drums, Jimmy lets loose when he's on them. His performance demonstrated the speed, footwork, and solid rock groove that have made him a first-call drummer for so many heavy rock legends.

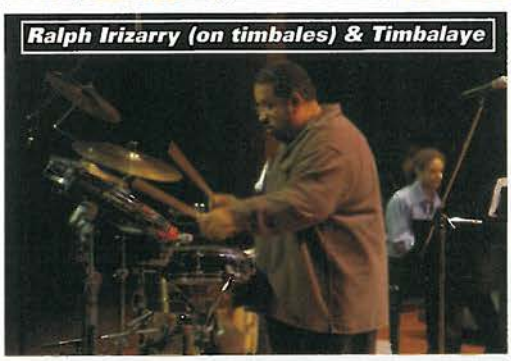
Billy Kilson & BK Groove closed the show with a set of contemporary jazz/funk: heavy on backbeat and originality. The tunes featured tight arrangements with mindbending time and style shifts, covering a wide dynamic range. While Billy is one of the genre's more physically animated drummers, when he locks down a groove, it *stays* locked.

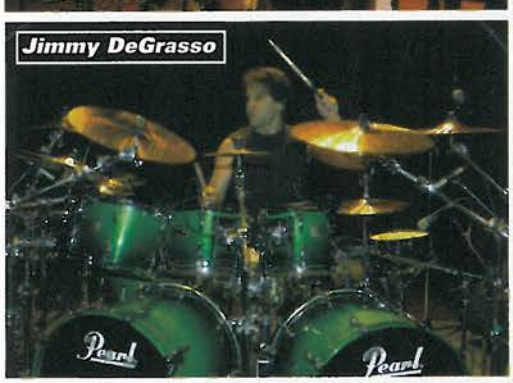
During the show, producers **Ralph Angelillo** and **Serge Gamache** made a lifetime achievement presentation to drum superstar (and fellow Canadian) **Neil Peart**. Sabian's **Wayne Blanchard** was on hand to read a note of appreciation and thanks from Neil, who could not receive the award in person. Also honored was Canadian jazz drummer, symphonic percussionist, and master teacher **Pierre Béluse**.

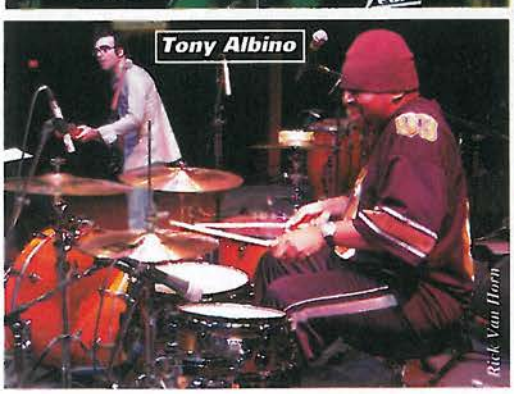
Sponsors for the Drum Fest included Drum Workshop, Evans, GMS, Latin Percussion, Mapex, Meinl, Paiste, Pearl, Pro-Mark, Regal Tip, Remo, Rimshot, Sabian, Shure, Sonor, Tama, Taye, Vater, Vic Firth, Yamaha, and Zildjian Cymbals and Drumsticks. (For additional Drum Fest photos, go to www.moderndrummer.com.)

Story by Rick Van Horn
Photos by Heinz Kronberger
except where indicated









Yamaha And UArts Host DTXplosion

Yamaha and Philadelphia's University Of The Arts combined to present an event focusing on electronic percussion this past October 23. Drummers converged on UArts for DTXplosion, a day of demos, workshops, and performances featuring Yamaha's DTX Series electronic drums. Performers included **Akira Jimbo**, **Tony Verderosa**, and **Marvin McQuitty**.

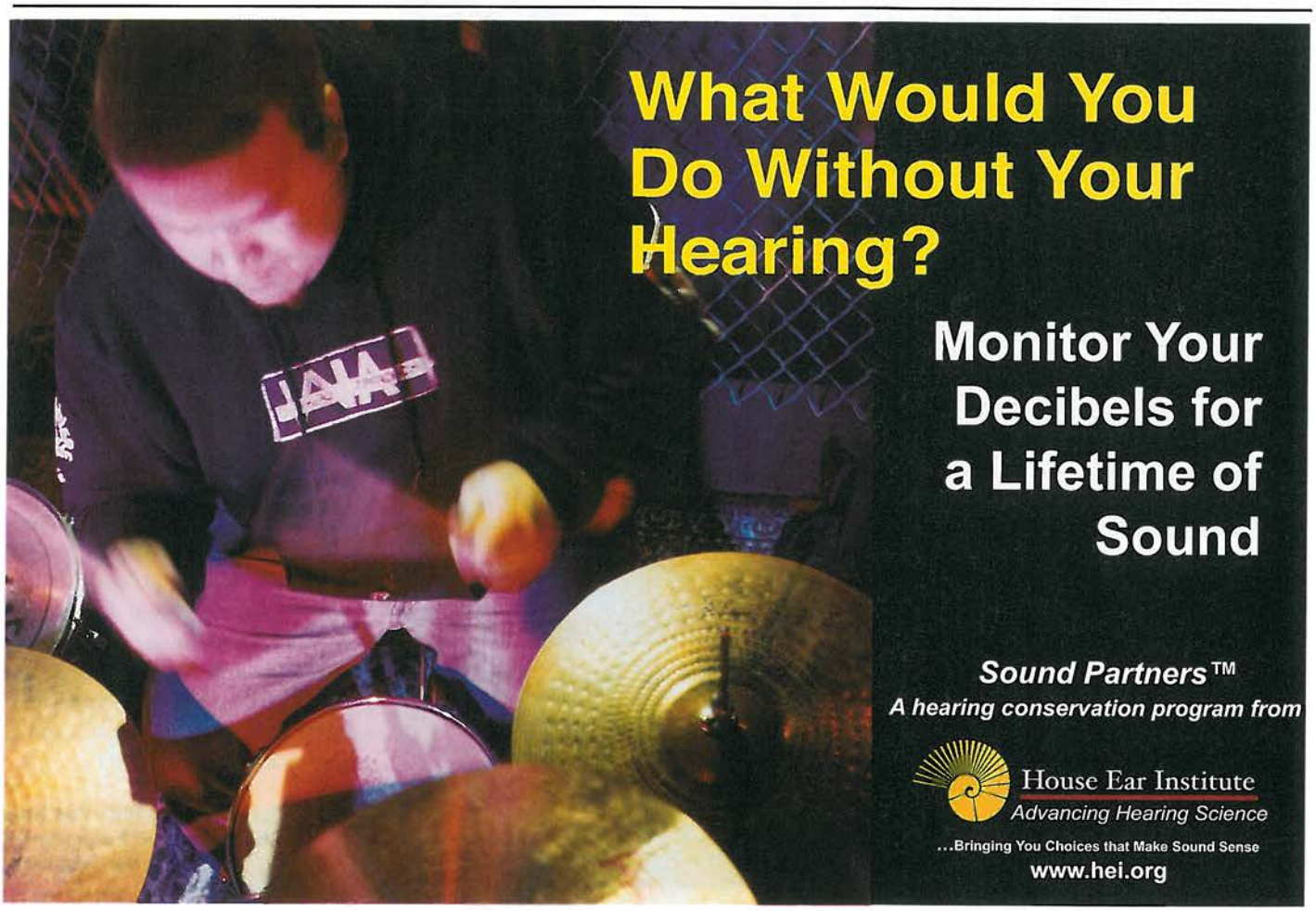
Tony Verderosa performs at Yamaha's DTXplosion, held at the University Of The Arts in Philadelphia.

According to UArts School Of Music director **Marc Dicciani**, who also performed, "The event was a unique educational opportunity. It gave musicians of all ages and interests a chance to see some incredible players and to try out some of the latest drum technology."

The day also included giveaways, with a DTXPRESSIII and monitor system as the main prize. Demo rooms allowed visitors to try out and purchase gear.

DTXplosion performers included (from left): Marvin McQuitty, Akira Jimbo, Tony Verderosa, and Marc Dicciani.

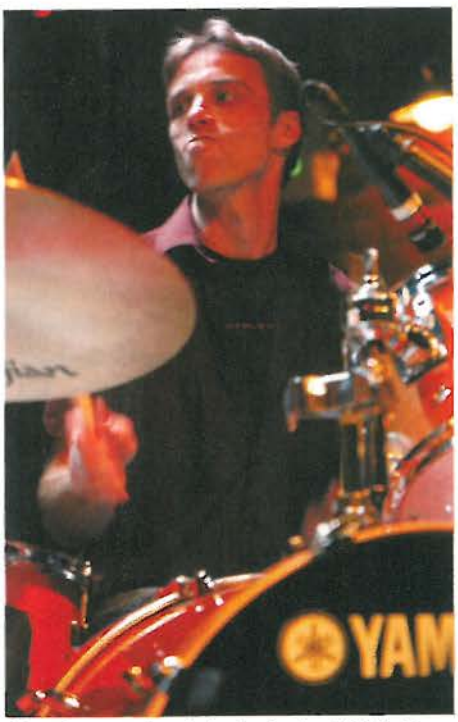
DTXplosion showcased how digital drums can be used in teaching, practice, worship, the recording studio, and live performance settings. Dicciani demonstrated the educational aspect, McQuitty covered church applications, while Verderosa and Jimbo demonstrated how electronics can be incorporated with acoustic drums. Yamaha and UArts currently have the first-ever electronic drum lab under development, using several DTXPRESSIII kits and a Yamaha LC2 Lab Control system.



The Brotherhood Of The Drum

This past November 18–19, *Modern Drummer* sponsored the first two nights of the second annual Ballard Jazz Festival in Seattle with "The Brotherhood Of The Drum." Drummer/bandleaders Matt Jorgensen and John Bishop organized the event. Realizing how many great drummers live in Seattle, they wanted to make them a focus of the festival.

The evening began with a brisk set from **Byron Vannoy**'s trio Sine. **John Bishop** followed with a crack quintet. Says Bishop, "Being lifer-sidemen, most drummers see the gamut of bandleading concepts. For me, the best thing is to hire good players, let them do what they do, and trust that music is going to come out."



Matt Cameron closed the Brotherhood Of The Drum show.

Michael Shrieve, who began his career playing with the original Santana band at the age of nineteen, closed the first night with his new band Tangletown. The tight, culture-hopping act featured vocals that blended Native American chant with polemic hip-hop.

Friday night opened with a blazing set from The **Gregg Keplinger** Trio. Keplinger—familiar to many as a drum builder—trod the ground between Gene Krupa and Elvin Jones with solos that were as clear as ice. Next, **Matt Jorgensen** & 451 offered flexible arrangements kept in dynamic control by Jorgenson's subtle leadership.

Matt Cameron closed with a brilliant interpretation of Thelonious Monk material, aided by Ryan Burns on keys and Geoff Harper on bass. Matt was laughing as he translated Monk's rhythmic eccentricities to the drums. The trio closed with a raging tear through Deep Purple's "Highway Star." "Well...." commented John Bishop, "No jazz festival is complete without a Deep Purple cover." **Bill White**

Indy Quickies

Francis Seriau, director of the Drumtech, Vocaltech, and Guitar-X schools in London, recently accompanied Jamiroquai bassist (and Guitar-X instructor) Nick Fyffe for a series of master classes at some of France's top schools. The classes focused on the work of the rhythm section, particularly what is required of the bass player and drummer in order to function together and with the rest of the band.

Roland's MOJO one-to-one customer interaction program currently includes MOJO product support, hands-on MOJO events (including clinics and special events), and interactive online MOJO communities. As part of the program, product-support specialists now field calls from 7:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Pacific Standard Time, Monday through Friday. In addition, owner's manuals are downloadable (PDF format), including for products dating back as much as thirty years.

Roland intends to expand the MOJO program to include email help/support, call-center automation, online forums, a profile management system, a clinic notification function, and a pre-registration option for online support.

The **D'Addario Foundation For The Performing Arts** has provided a $5,000 grant to JazzMasters Workshop. The grant will help to expand JazzMasters' weekly after-school workshops program for school children interested in becoming musicians. D'Addario is the parent company for **Evans Drumheads**. For more information on The D'Addario Foundation For The Performing Arts, visit www.daddario.com/foundation.html. For more information on JazzMasters Workshop, visit www.jazzmastersworkshop.org.

Artist/educator **Chuck Silverman** is coordinating educational trips to Cuba and Brazil. The Cuba program will be held March 20 through April 3 in Havana and Matanzas, which Chuck describes as "incredible wellsprings of music and drumming, with which we are involved on a daily basis."

Dates for the Brazil program in summer 2005 have yet to be established. For further information, contact Chuck Silverman at drumnart@earthlink.net.

After twenty-five years with the company, **Dinah Gretsch** has retired from daily operations of Gretsch Drums. She will remain active as a consultant with the company, as well as in her "favorite job" as Mrs. Fred Gretsch. *Modern Drummer* wishes Dinah a happy and healthy retirement.

In Memoriam

Jimmy Lovelace

Veteran New York jazz drummer Jimmy Lovelace died this past October 29, at the age of sixty-four. He was a classic bebop artist who performed with many leading jazz musicians.

Jimmy's credits include performances with guitarists Wes Montgomery and George Benson, pianist Junior Mance, and clarinetist Tony Scott. He played on more than two dozen recordings, including *Tony Scott, The George Benson Cookbook, We Loved You* by pianist Frank Hewitt, and *The Eternal Pyramid* by Across 7 Street (the cover of which features Jimmy). Later in his career Jimmy appeared regularly at Smalls, a West Village club in New York, performing with Hewitt and Across 7 Street.

Dimebag Darrell Memorial Funds

Two memorial funds have been established in the name of Dimebag Darrell Abbott, Damageplan guitarist and brother of drummer Vinnie Paul Abbott. Dimebag Darrell was shot and killed onstage in Columbus, Ohio this past December.

One fund has been set up to cover bereavement expenses for Jeffrey "Mayhem" Thompson (who was also killed) and medical expenses for John "Kat" Brooks and Chris Paluska (who were also shot). Checks payable to "The Dimebag Darrell Memorial Fund" may be mailed to Dimebag Darrell Memorial Fund, 110 SW Thomas, Burleson, TX 76028.

A special fund has also been set up through VH1's Save The Music Foundation, supports which music education programs. Checks can be mailed to VH1 Save The Music Foundation, 1515 Broadway, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10036, or you can use your credit card and call (888) 841-4687.

Spencer Dryden

Spencer Dryden with The Dinosaurs in 1984

As we went to press with this issue, we learned of the passing of Spencer Dryden, long-time drummer with Jefferson Airplane, New Riders Of The Purple Sage, and The Dinosaurs. An *In Memoriam* piece on Spencer will appear in our June issue.

QUICK BEATS

CHARLES COLLINS
(R&B SESSION GREAT)

What are some of your favorite grooves?
Bernard Purdie on "Spanish Harlem" (Aretha Franklin), Leon "Ndugu" Chancler on drums with Sheila E on percussion on "Dukey Stick" (George Duke), Jeff Porcaro on "Africa" (Toto), John "JR" Robinson on "Higher Love" (Steve Winwood), and Steve Gadd on "Fifty Ways To Leave Your Lover" (Paul Simon). I can listen to these songs and grooves all day.

What are some of your favorite grooves that *you've* played on?
"You'll Never Find" by Lou Rawls, "Wake Up Everybody" by Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes, "Enjoy Yourself" by The Jackson Five, "Are You Ready For Love" by Elton John, and "Silly" by Deniece Williams. The time signature changed four times in the intro of "Silly," but we still made it *groove*.

Who's Using What

Studio and touring percussionist **Jason Hann** (now with String Cheese Incident) is a new Toca percussion endorser.

New Meinl cymbal artists include **Mike Justian** (Unearth), LA–based touring and session drummer **Martin Flores** (Paulina Rubio, Joan Sebastian), and Nashville drummer **Dave Lemonds** (Keith Anderson). Now playing Meinl percussion is drummer **Barry Kerch** (Shinedown).

Lee Finkelstein (Funk Filharmonik) is a Samson microphone endorser.

Mayer Bros. Drums has added **Paul "Deep Pocket" Allen** (Kelly Clarkson, Scott Humphrey) to its family of artists.

Master conguero **Francisco Aguabella** is the newest member of the Pearl percussion artist roster. Meanwhile, **Jason Rullo** (Symphony X) has come on board as a drumset artist.

Stephen Peck of ZAO is using Spaun Drums.

Evans Drumheads are now being endorsed by **Justin Foley** (Killswitch Engage) and **Francis Mark** (From Autumn To Ashes).

Well-known touring and session percussion specialist **Pete Lockett** (Bjork, Peter Gabriel, Robert Plant, Bill Bruford, Jeff Beck) has joined Pro-Mark's endorser roster, along with **Justin Poree** (Ozomatli), **Jay Skowronek** (Maxeen), **Carlos Aguilar** (40 Below Summer), and **Ti Kreck** (Instruction).

Andy Green (Days Of Worth), **Damon Richardson** (Danko Jones), and **Benny Greb** (independent) are new Sonor drum and hardware artists, while **Mylious Johnson** (Pink) is endorsing Sonor hardware and Giant Step pedals.

Veteran drum tech and drum builder **Jeff Ocheltree** is now endorsing Groove Juice drum and cymbal cleaning products.

Up-and-coming ethnic and Latin percussionist **Shangó Dely** (from Colombia) is playing the Stand line of all-wood percussion stands made by PercussionStands.com.

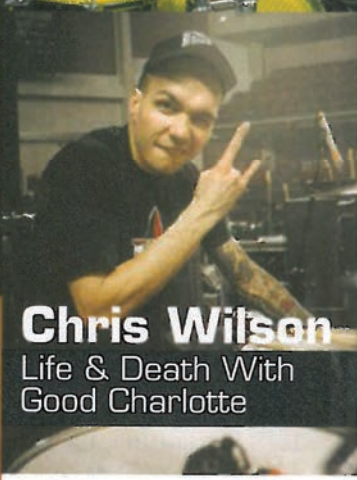
COMING IN MAY

Antonio Sanchez
Latin-Jazz Brilliance With Pat Metheny

Rick Malkin

Gene Ambo

Jimmy Chamberlin
Life Begins Again For Former Smashing Pumpkin



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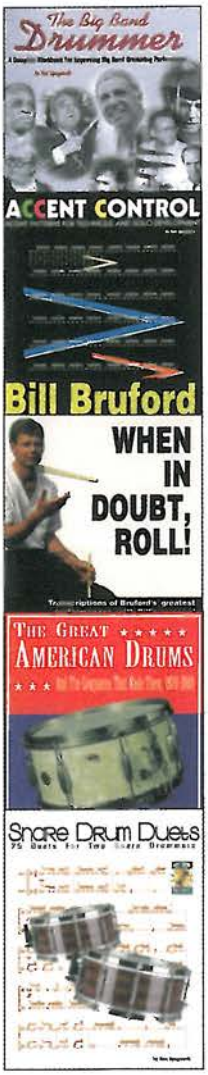

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A compilation of enlightening conversations with the great drummers of jazz, from Louie Bellson to Tony Williams.
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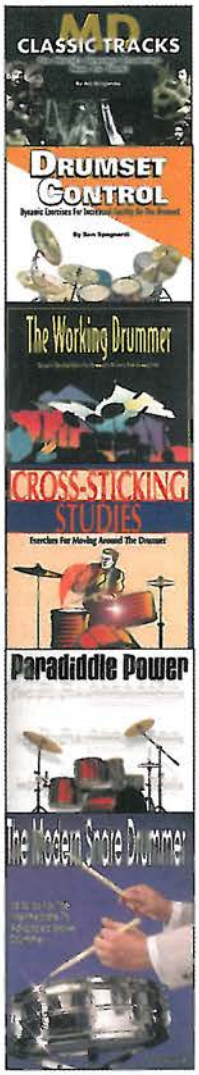

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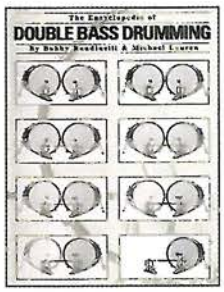

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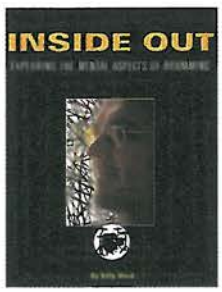

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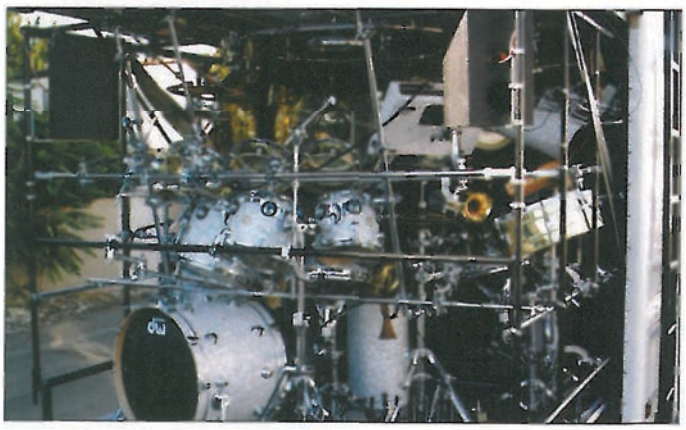
Talk About "On The Road...."

Have you ever wished that you could take your drums anywhere, any time the mood strikes you, and just jam to your heart's content? Maybe the seashore...or the mountains...or the parking lot of a local mall (just to enjoy the reactions of passersby)?

Joe Parisi of Riverbank, California had such a wish—and decided to make it come true. Over the past twelve years, he's put together a combination motor home and performance venue. He started with a 1984 Chevy step-van (dubbed Vanasaurus), outfitted it with basic living accommodations, and then created a shelf that slides in and out of the back. Atop that shelf sits a customized kit that includes DW drums,



a timpani, a set of timbales, a wide variety of percussion and sound effects, several cymbals, an electronic trigger pad, and a powerful stereo system. The kit is enclosed in and mounted on a cage framework of Joe's devising.

An outdoorsman as well as a drummer, Joe enjoys bringing his two loves together. "The idea of playing with nature is what turns me on," he says. "I can play sitting five feet off the ground in a parking lot, or fifty yards above the surf below a cliff. I've played in the mountains during a thunderstorm, answering the storm with my low drums, timpani, and gongs. I can't wait to jam with the snow."

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Kit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.

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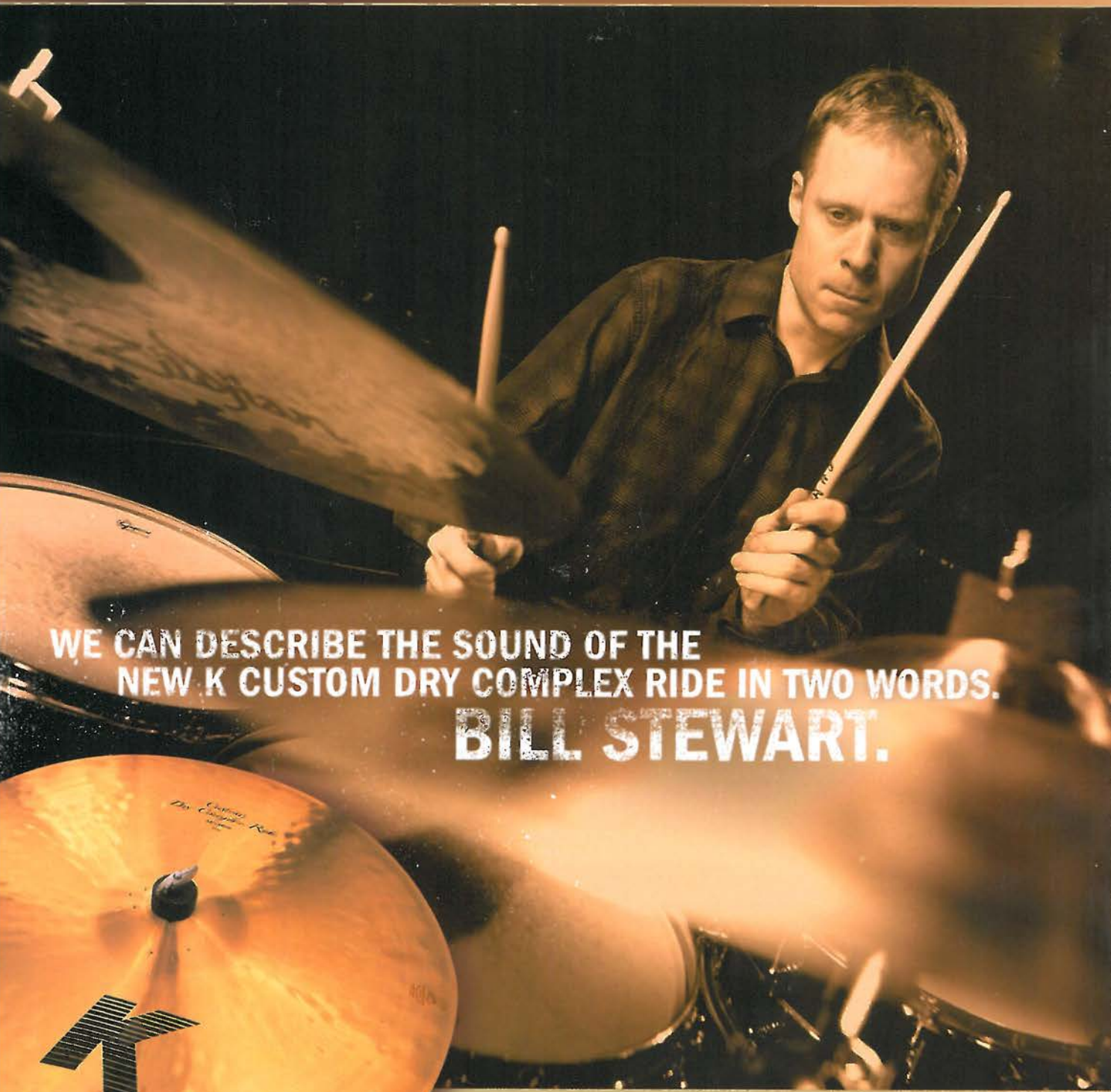

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